

# Red

JANUARY 2016 £4.10

## THE BEAUTY HOT LIST

72 GAME-CHANGERS WE TESTED & LOVED



THE NO-KNIFE NIP N TUCK (WOULD YOU?)

### Red's talking about...

- Christian Slater: 90s bad boy reborn
- Caroline Flack: Funny & fearless
- Naz Shah: A Westminster inspiration

- HAPPY-BOOSTING FOOD
- FIND YOUR #FITSPO
- CONFIDENCE – AN ACTOR'S GUIDE

**MICHELLE DOCKERY**  
GOODBYE DOWNTON  
HELLO... BACKPACKING

### TABOO

'Sex is all we have in common'

**MUST-BUY**  
THE NEW 'IT' PARKA

### Party!

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# PRADA CANDY

## FLORALE

The Eau de Toilette





# Dior





FROM LEFT: Instant outfit-boosters (page 43); Red meets Caroline Flack (page 56); Sarah Solemani, pictured with Holliday Grainger at our Red Women of the Year Awards, shares her best-ever reads (page 87)

# LET'S CELEBRATE



'Women can be funny and outrageous and sexy and complicated all at the same time,' says our cover star Michelle Dockery in this month's pages. Hear, hear. As the fascinating actress sloughs off her *Downton* persona one last time (make

a date for the Christmas Day finale), you will be excited to hear the surprises she has in store for the future (turn to page 104). There is a bevy of compelling female TV talent in this issue – from Dockery to the brilliant writer and performer Sarah Solemani (page 87), to the ebullient Caroline Flack, who reveals her frank and fearless thoughts on life, love and feminism to writer Kate Wills on page 56. I hope you find them as entertaining and surprising as I did.

It's that time of year, of course, when bingeing on the gogglebox seems totally acceptable. On

that note, do check out Christian Slater's return to form in *Mr Robot* (Red's entertainment director Rosamund Dean's hot tip; page 72). And when you do manage to prise yourself off the sofa for a spot of easy, indulgent (but not too indulgent) entertaining, our party menu from the new queens of the social scene Tart London is a palate refresher and hits the spot beautifully (page 134).

As ever, we have got some stunning writing for you in this issue – Gaby Hinsliff's extraordinary profile of new Westminster MP Naz Shah gave me goosebumps (page 62) and, on a totally different note, Red columnist Rosie Green's trip to an am-dram improv class in search of thespian confidence tricks is belly-achingly hilarious (page 68). Read and enjoy! We've had an exhilarating year at Red, producing content we love for smart women like you. Wishing you a happy and healthy New Year. See you in 2016.

*Sarah Bailey*  
Editor-in-chief SARAHBAILEY

## THIS MONTH I HAVE BEEN:

**GETTING** my east London groove on... **CELEBRATING** pop-cultural icon Princess Julia in her one-woman show at The Glory in Dalston; **SHARING** delicious plates at Ivy's Mess Hall (Kingsland High Street); **BEING DAZZLED** yet again by the life-changing work of The Big House Theatre in their new show *Electric* at the Rio Cinema (until December 12th); **TWEETING** @SarahRedMag



**GIVE RED FOR CHRISTMAS**

Order a gift subscription by December 17th and your friend can start 2016 with our brilliant February Reboot issue. See page 83 for details

# N°5







N°5  
**CHANEL**  
PARIS  
PARFUM



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**THIS MONTH'S COVERS** Michelle Dockery wears, far left: Jumpsuit; earrings, both price on request, both Giorgio Armani Privé. Left: Dress, £725, Paule Ka. Ring, £55, Hélène Zubeldia at Monnier Frères. Shoes, £440, Sophia Webster. Styling Nicola Rose. Photographed by Max Abadian. Hair Leigh Keates at Premier Hair and Makeup, using Batiste Stylist Range. Make-up Mary Greenwell at Premier Hair and Makeup, using Chanel S 2016 and Sublimage. Nails Emma Welsh at August Management, using Leighton Denny. Stylist's assistant Chloe Forde. Set design Laura Timmons. Props assistant Rachel Mathewson. Location Spring Studios. Recreate Michelle's look using Vitalumière Aqua Ultra-Light Skin Perfecting Makeup, Le Blanc Multi-Use Illuminating Base, Soleil Tan de Chanel Bronzing Makeup Base, Le Sourcils de Chanel Perfect Brows, Illusion d'Ombre Long Wear Luminous Eyeshadow in Mirage, Ecriture de Chanel Eyeliner Pen in Noir and Rouge Allure Intense Long Wear Lip Colour in Vaporeuse, all Chanel. Subscribe to Red to receive the limited-edition covers (above, right); see page 91 for details.

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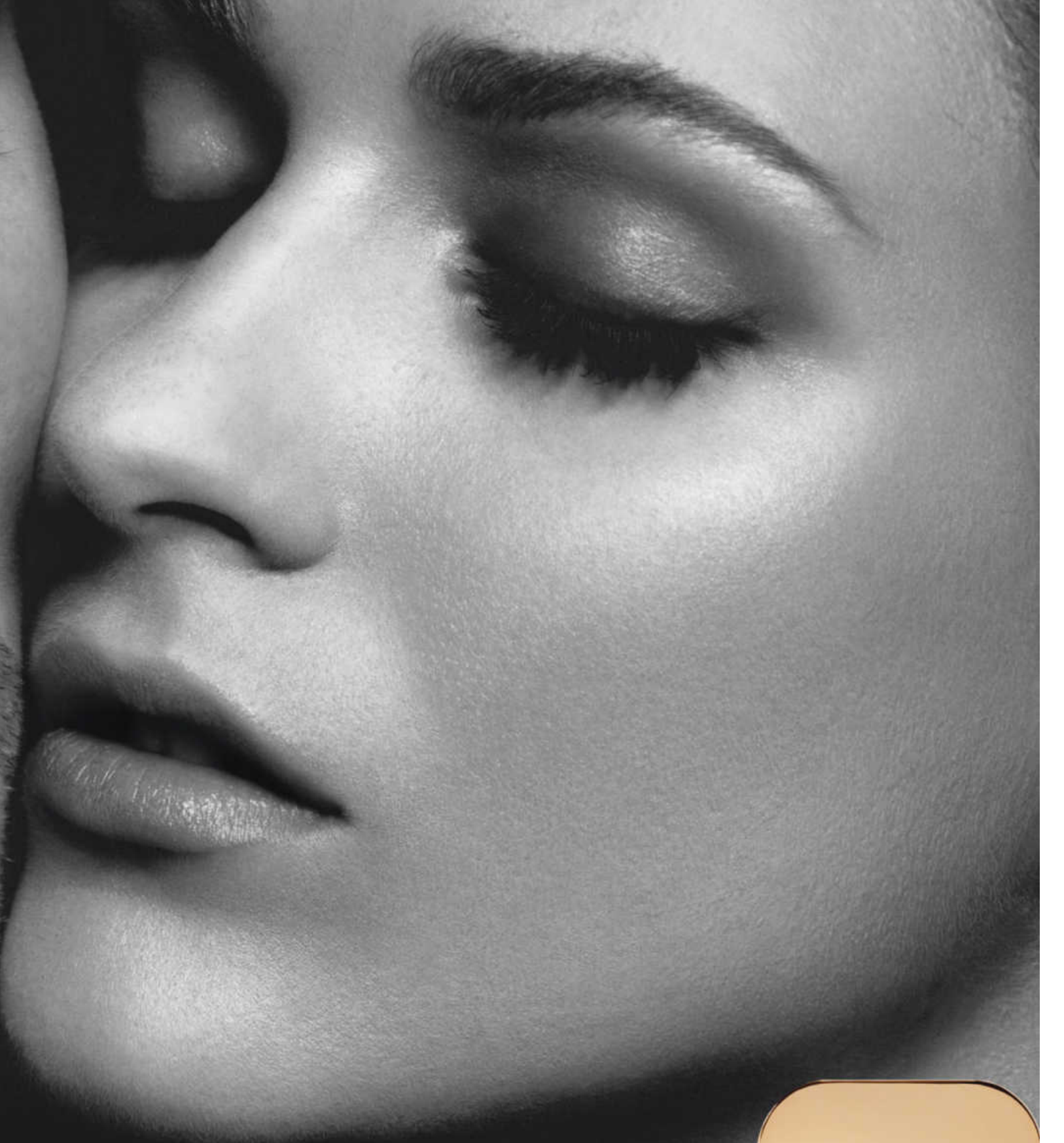






GUCCI





# GUILTY

THE GUILTY FRAGRANCES



# CONTRIBUTORS

January 2016

**Gaby Hinsliff**

Interviews Naz Shah MP on page 62

## BEST THINGS IN LIFE?

● Home-made sloe gin  
● Dancing ● Hanging out with my son ● Peonies  
**ON NEW YEAR'S EVE, I'LL BE...** Somewhere involving good friends, mountains of food and a log fire.



**Petina Gappah**

Recalls a childhood accident that changed her outlook on life in *The scars that make me*, on page 81

## BEST THINGS IN LIFE?

● Reading ● Travelling with my son ● Korean food ● Everything Missoni ● Zimbabwean art and music  
**ON NEW YEAR'S EVE, I'LL BE...** Hosting a fabulous party at my parents' house in Harare.



**Kate Willis**

Talks feminism, heartbreak and Harry Styles with Caroline Flack on page 56

## BEST THINGS IN LIFE?

● Perfectly poached eggs ● A hot-water-bottle-warmed bed ● Mastering crow pose for a whole three seconds ● Listening to radio show *This American Life*  
**ON NEW YEAR'S EVE, I'LL BE...** On my rooftop in Peckham, watching the fireworks.



**Richard Godwin**

Tells us why cocktails are key to a great party, on page 142

## BEST THINGS IN LIFE?

● Making El Presidentes for my wife Johanna ● Debussy Préludes ● Loud guitars  
**ON NEW YEAR'S EVE, I'LL BE...** At my old friends' house party down my road, anyone fancy babysitting?



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\*\*Consumer test - 194 women, after 4 weeks.

†Consumer test - 194 women, after 7 days.

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# CLARINS



# SAY IT WRITE IT TWEET IT

If you have any news, views or issues you'd like to see covered, we'd love to hear from you



Helena Bonham Carter charmed us – and you – with her candid interview in the November issue

## Red love

Our *Women of the Year* issue (November) sparked an overwhelming variety of emails, letters and tweets. And with the likes of Helena Bonham Carter, Brita Fernandez Schmidt, Elizabeth Gilbert, Tess Daly and Patricia Arquette (to name just a few) on our pages, it's no wonder. @rachelmolho on Twitter wrote, 'New @RedMagDaily just fell open on brilliant article on @BritaFS @WomenforWomen inspiring #trailblazingwomen.' Similarly, @adreamofponine tweeted, 'I'm actually crying over @RedMagDaily Helena Bonham Carter interview. She's truly an extraordinary woman.' While @natasha\_carr wrote, 'Feeling inspired by Elizabeth Gilbert's life-affirming article in this month's @RedMagDaily. "I may not win, but you will know I was here."'

**TESS DALY'S MY FAVOURITE THING REALLY STRUCK A CHORD WITH ME.** Unlike Tess and many of my friends, I am lucky enough to still have my dad. There isn't a day that goes by when I don't feel grateful for this. Next week, to celebrate his retirement and my

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40th, we are going to the Brazilian Pantanal and the Amazon. I don't know what the future holds but our holidays together will be times to treasure and memories to look back on. I hope to get a photo of us together that captures that moment, just like Tess did.  
*Rachel Howlett, via email*

**I FELT COMPELLED TO WRITE IN RESPONSE TO IS THERE A NARCISSIST IN YOUR LIFE?** This article has changed my life in the time it took to read it. I have always had a strained relationship with my mother and a feeling that I'll never be good enough. This article gave me permission to feel as I do: sad, lonely, yet relieved to have a label to hang on her behaviour. I know now that I'm not alone. I feel as if I'm starting a new period in my life – guilt free. Thank you.  
*Sue Simms, via email*

**Our mail of the month wins an Elizabeth Arden goody bag, worth £100.** With Nourishing Lip Balm, Skin Protectant, Nighttime Miracle Moisturizer

and All-Over Miracle Oil, all from the Eight Hour range, top-to-toe glow has never been easier. This month's prize goes to Rachel Howlett, mentioned above.

@yvonneferg1 @jojomoyes @RedMagDaily just read *The end of a fitness affair* – cracked me up! I had same reaction, loved it, then hated it!

@CarolineBrown1 Stunning recipes & interview with @SabrinaGhayour announcing her new cookbook #Sirocco in @RedMagDaily

## RED'S AWARDS

**MARKS & SPENCER FOOD PORTRAITURE AWARD**

**2015** (Jonathan Gregson) Pink Lady Food Photographer of the Year Awards 2015

**JASMINE SOUNDBITE:**

**MAGAZINES** (Annabel Meggeson) Jasmine Awards

**2015 BEST MONTHLY CONSUMER MAGAZINE**

**JOURNALIST & JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR**

(Annabel Meggeson) Johnson & Johnson Skincare Journalism Awards 2014

**BEST JOURNALISM: BEAUTY OR GROOMING** (Annabel Meggeson and Rosie Green)

**& BEST LAYOUT: BEAUTY OR GROOMING** (Annabel Meggeson and Haley Austin)

**P&G Beauty & Grooming Awards 2013**

**BEST DIGITAL FRAGRANCE EXPERIENCE** (Annabel Meggeson)

**The Jasmine Awards 2012**

**BEST DESIGNED SITE** Online Media Awards 2012

**CONSUMER MAGAZINE OF THE YEAR** PPA Awards 2011



# NEW

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\*Based on mass-market facial moisturiser and cleanser value sales for the past 12 months ending December 2014

  
**OLAY**  
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# Shop

Edited by OONAGHBRENNAN

## PRACTICAL

*magic*

Call off the search, we've found our perfect off-duty bag. The Swagger from Coach has a cool, downtown New York vibe, that has become synonymous with the all-American brand under the creative direction of Stuart Vevers. We adore its practicality (a top handle *and* a cross-body strap), and we're in love with the colour – winter's hot new neutral, burgundy. In other words, we're sold. 🇬🇧



**Leather bag,**  
£425, Coach



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WEEKEND STYLE

# DRESS CODE: OFF-DUTY



**Cotton jumper**, £155, Kenzo at Stylebop



**Acetate sunglasses**, £190, Karen Walker

Nail the new denim, go for cool khaki and definitely buy a bomber



**Cotton-mix coat**, £207, Sézane

**Silver and diamond ring**, £160, Zadig & Voltaire at Harrods

**Silk scarf**, £85, Rockins at Matches fashion.com



**Leatherskirt**, £425, Filippa K at Fenwick



**Leather boots**, £315, Claudie Pierlot



Alexa Chung

**CITY BREAK**  
DARK DENIM, BOLD STRIPES AND LUXE LEATHER BRING A POLISH TO PRACTICAL STYLE



**Leather and suede bag**, £755, Jil Sander at Fenwick



**Denim tip**  
Turn inside out and wash on cold to avoid fading  
**Denim jeans**, £120, Weekend MaxMara

**Leather trainers**, £229, Zespa at Fenwick >

**Le Labo**  
Rose 31 EDP, £150 for 100ml at Liberty



**Wool-mix jumper**, £199, Sandro



**Leather gloves**, £39.95, Massimo Dutti



**Cashmere-mix jumper**, £290, Madeleine Thompson at Fenwick



**9ct rose gold bracelet**, £250; **diamond and sapphire charms**, from £260 each, all Dodo

**Cotton-mix skirt**, £45, Monsoon



**Analogue Guide Barcelona**, £8.95, Waterstones





**Acetate sunglasses,** £350, Thierry Lasry at Matches fashion.com



**Wool jumper,** £260, Bella Freud at Net-A-Porter



**Cotton jacket,** £245, Pam & Gela at Harvey Nichols



**Denim jeans,** £55, & Other Stories



**Leather bag,** £49.99, Zara

**Lumix camera,** £419.99, Panasonic at John Lewis



**Leather boots,** £55, Asos



**Glitter and leather trainers,** £295, Stuart Weitzman



**18ct gold-plated sterling silver and mother-of-pearl necklace,** £280, Theodora Warre



*Try camouflaje*  
**Neoprene jacket,** £205, Essentiel



**Wool hat,** £140, Markus Lupfer



**Wool jumper,** £210, Isabel Marant Etoile at Liberty



**Cotton skirt,** £28, Next



**Matisse A4 sketchbook,** £12, Tate



**The hero parka**

A parka will never date so buy the best you can afford. We love Acne's version: quilted, faux-fur-trimmed, waterproof and seriously cool. We rest our case **Polyamide and down coat,** £750, Acne at Liberty »

## Sneaker style

Flat-shoe expert Hannah Rochell of enbrogue.com charts the history of the trainer in this beautifully illustrated book. With over 40 styles of trainers including iconic brands and collaborations, Rochell shows you how to style the fashion staple. *En Brogue: The Trainers Guide* by Hannah Rochell (Saltyard Books, £10)





*mon parfum*



*Paloma Picasso*

## NEW DENIM TRENDS

FROM FRAYED-HEM FLARES TO A POLISHED PENCIL SKIRT, MEET THE NEW WINTER DENIM



**Acetate sunglasses,** £321, Cutler And Gross at Farfetch



**Cashmere jumper,** £160, Topshop Unique

**Shearling and suede bag,** £785, Jerome Dreyfuss

### THE GROWN-UP DENIM SKIRT

Pencil slim or A-line and buttoned down the front – the only rule, it must be a midi

**Denim skirt,** £85, Topshop Unique



**Leather shoes,** £69.95, Massimo Dutti



**Denim jacket,** £44.95, Gap

### THE JEAN JACKET

Wear it oversized and draped over your shoulders. Think of it as you would your leather biker

**Sterling silver and 14ct gold bracelet,** £275; **sterling silver and 14ct gold charms,** from £70 each, all Pandora

**Poly-mix trousers,** £25.99, Zara



**Suede bag,** £450, Clare V at Net-A-Porter



**Cotton jumper,** £135, Claudie Pierlot

**Leather sandals,** £125, Senso



### FLARED & FRAYED

The new frayed, cropped flares should swing just above your ankle boots. Chop the hem of an old pair for an instant update



**Cotton coat,** £365, APC



**Cotton top,** £125, Karen Millen

**18ct rose gold and pearl ring,** £350, Links of London



**Leather bag,** £765, Hill & Friends

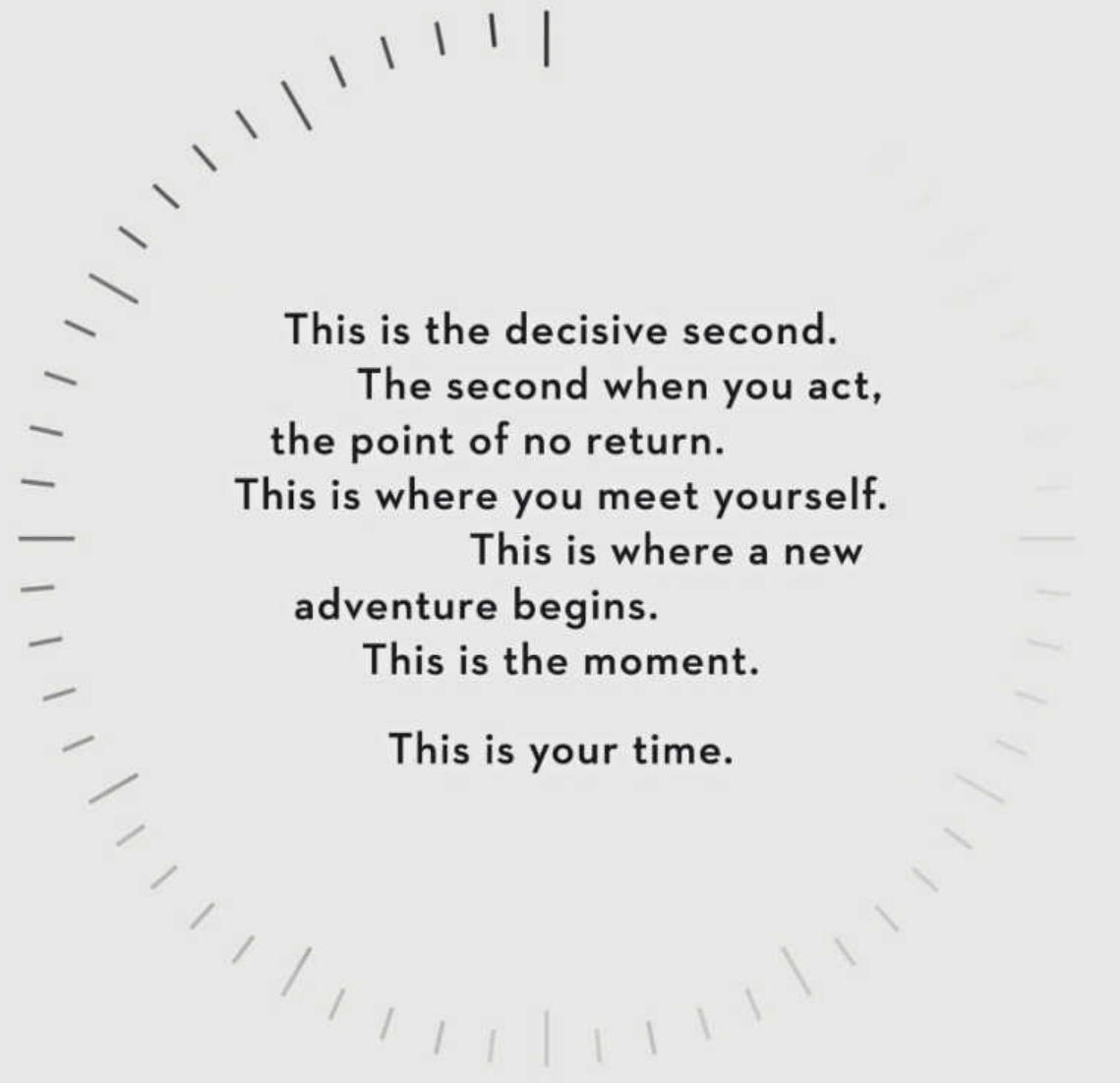


**Patent-leather boots,** £165, Whistles



**Denim jeans,** £185, Masscob »





**This is the decisive second.  
The second when you act,  
the point of no return.  
This is where you meet yourself.  
This is where a new  
adventure begins.  
This is the moment.  
This is your time.**

## BOMBER SQUAD

IT'S THE VERSATILE JACKET SHAPE GIVING YOUR WARDROBE A FRESH NEW EDGE

### STYLE TIP

Choose pattern and embellished styles to luxe up relaxed denim and trainers

**Cotton jacket,**  
£328,  
Maison  
Kitsuné



**Denim jeans,**  
£190, Maje



**Leather bag,** £795,  
Sophie  
Hulme



**9ct gold, pearl and enamel ring,** £310,  
Delfina Delettrez at  
Net-A-Porter



**Leather trainers,**  
£345, Charlotte  
Olympia

*Olivia Palermo*

**Acetate sunglasses,**  
£159, Fendi



**Leather bag,** £195,  
Rebecca Minkoff



**Wool skirt,**  
£275, Chinti  
and Parker



**Leather shoes,**  
£135, French  
Connection



**Wool jacket,**  
£520, Mother  
of Pearl at  
Harvey Nichols



**Poly-mix jacket,**  
£89.99, Zara



**Satin jacket,**  
£360, Hilfiger  
Collection



**Poly-mix jacket,**  
£65, Marks &  
Spencer »



### HOW TO WEAR IT

Give a classic skirt a fashion edge with suede in 1970s burnt orange

**Suede jacket,**  
£420, Sandro





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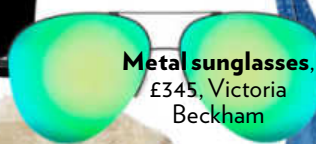
**Wool-mix hat,**  
£8, M&Co



**Wool-mix jumper,** £360,  
Carven at  
Harvey Nichols



**Metal sunglasses,**  
£345, Victoria  
Beckham



## Snow days

Perfect Moment brings affordable luxury to your ski-drobe with a super-cool collection of biker-style down jackets, retro slogan sweaters and flattering slimline salopettes. A combination of fashion and function, the collection is available in adult and kids sizes so the whole family can sync on the slopes. Available at *Net-A-Porter*, *Matchesfashion.com*, *Avenue32.com* and *Perfectmoment.com*

Compiled by Oonagh Brennan. Photographs NohalideDigital.com, Rex Features, Getty Images, Imaxtree. For stockist details, see the Directory

**Faux-fur ear muffs,** £6,  
George



**Style tip**  
Layer a thin quilted gilet under a faux-fur jacket for extra warmth

**Shearling jacket,** £695, Massimo Dutti



**Denim dungarees,**  
£49.99, Mango



**Denim jeans,** £130,  
2nd Day



**Nylon gilet,** £65, Banana Republic



**Cashmere jumper,** £375, Eudon Choi + Brora



**Poly-mix jacket,** £250, Perfect Moment



**Wool jumper,** £245, Perfect Moment



**Shearling bag,** £59.50, Banana Republic



**Suede boots,** £320, Ikkii at Harvey Nichols



**Sheepskin slippers,** £75, Ugg



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CASEBACK.



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ESSAY

# WRAP UP JANUARY

Don't let the sales beat you. Fashion blogger Garance Doré talks how to pick a coat that tells the world you mean business

**A** coat is the very first thing you see on someone. People touch the fabric as they say hello, or spot it from halfway down the street. And if you can find that rare thing – a perfectly tailored, perfectly timeless coat – you can exude elegance and attitude, wherever you go.

I've found that the right coat walks with you, not against you. It protects and empowers you. It can be worn in different seasons: as a shield against the cold (like my favourite camel Stella McCartney, which flows all the way to the ankles), or as an undercoat (I like to layer a belted wrap coat under oversized ones for a cool effect). I think that in winter we often dress uncreatively, not because we want to, but because we simply don't know what to wear when it's freezing cold outside, especially in New York where I live, and the winters are so long.

As a fashion photographer, I started capturing images of people on the streets so, for me, how you dress outdoors is one of the most important style lessons to learn. That's why I first fell in love with coats – a strong shape or bright colour is the best way to stay elegant and walk confidently when the cold creeps in. How do I know when I've found the perfect piece? I bring my hand to the fabric and touch it. I check the tag and see what it's made of. I look at the cut, the details, the way it makes me feel when I slip inside it.

I still remember seeing my favourite camel coat in Zara five years ago, just after I'd moved to New York. The fabric felt so beautifully soft against my skin and it was impeccably cut. It moved with me, effortlessly, flowing as I walked. This can't be Zara, I thought. Of course I bought it on the spot, and have been wearing it ever since. Even today everyone still asks me where it's from, so it taught me that if you know how to pick the right item, you can find timeless pieces on the high street.

It wasn't always this way; it took me some time to love and respect The Coat. When I was younger, one winter my roommate and I decided that coats were totally out of fashion. Instead, we pooled our budgets and invested in Agnès B wool sweaters that were beautiful, but utterly impractical. And then the coldness of winter snuck up on us and we realised



what a mistake we had made. From that day onwards I never underestimated the transformative power of the perfect coat. And I never will again. 📖

*Love x Style x Life by Garance Doré (Simon & Schuster, £16.99)*

**FROM TOP:** Doré models her favourite Zara coat; one of Doré's street-style shots from her new book

## 5 WAYS TO STYLE IT LIKE GARANCE

**Acetate sunglasses,**  
£40, Le Specs



**Crepe trousers,**  
£545, Joseph at Net-A-Porter



**Wool coat,** £165,  
& Other Stories



**Suede shoes,**  
£430, Chloé at  
Matchesfashion.com



**Leather bag,**  
£280, Gerard Darel



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big coat edit at  
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**Metal and faux-pearl ring, £255, Valentino at Matchesfashion.com**

STYLE TRANSFORMERS

# OH, YOU PRETTY THINGS

From of-the-moment pearls to all things bright and beautiful, an exuberant new mood is about to hit your winter wardrobe

**Silver-plated and Swarovski pearl necklace, £256, Ca&Lou**

**Metal and faux-pearl earrings, £9.99, Zara**

**Stainless steel and faux-pearl earrings, £45, Skagen**

**Rose gold and Swarovski pearl ring, £39, Tom Shot for Cadenzza**

**Faux-pearl necklace, £18.50, Wallis**

**Faux-pearl earrings, £195, Simone Rocha at Mytheresa.com**

**18ct gold and pearl ring, £750, Georg Jensen**

## MAD ABOUT THE PEARL

Forget any preconceived ideas – pearls are having a moment. How will you wear yours?

**Sterling silver and freshwater pearl bangle, £45, Pia Jewellery**

**Metal, Swarovski crystal and faux-pearl ring set, £165, Joomi Lim at Liberty**

**18ct gold, pearl and diamond earrings, £750, Georg Jensen**

**18ct gold and pearl ear cuffs, £645, Georg Jensen**

**Metal and faux-pearl earrings, £7.50, Freedom at Topshop**

**Gold-plated and faux-pearl earrings, £139, Rebecca at House of Fraser**

**Girl With A Pearl Earring by Johannes Vermeer »**



**Leather clutch, £395,**  
Christopher Kane at Liberty

**Sterling silver earrings, £26,** Thomas Sabo

**Acetate and metal sunglasses, £217,** Matthew Williamson by Linda Farrow Gallery at Farfetch

**Metal and Swarovski crystal hairslides, £175,** Jennifer Behr at Net-A-Porter

**Wool and straw clutch, £199,** Serpui at Fenwick

**Cotton blouse, £32,** Asos

**Viscose top, £305,** MSGM at Matches fashion.com

**Palladium-plated and Swarovski crystal ring, £205,** Gucci at Net-A-Porter

**Silk dress, £355,** Emma Cook at Fenwick

**Metal necklace, £12,** Oliver Bonas

**Brocade headband, £28,** Anthropologie

**Style tip**  
The new modern neutrals – navy, burgundy and bottle green – give vintage prints a contemporary edge.

## WILD THINGS

Florals, feathers and flocks of birds were all over the catwalks this season. Welcome an eclectic edge

**22ct gold-plated silver earrings, £174,** Alex Monroe

**Brocade shoes, £525,** Miu Miu at Net-A-Porter

**9ct gold and moonstone earrings, £750**

**9ct gold and green tourmaline stacking ring, £365**

**9ct gold and diamond ring, £995**

**9ct gold and diamond earrings, £600**

## Hall of fame

Everyone's talking about Hall. The collection is the brainchild of ex Net-A-Porter jewellery buyer Min Lee (left) and bridges the gap between fine and costume jewellery. In Fenwick Bond Street and with a store in London's Notting Hill, and at hall-collection.com, the line is causing a stir among the fashion pack. Here, Lee shares her tips to everyday accessorising.

● I love pieces that can be worn everyday. The large diamond ear

jacket has always been a favourite. It just floats along the earlobe.

● My everyday jewellery consists of a vintage watch, bracelets and my wedding band and then I mix and match pieces to wear depending on my mood.

● I like to layer necklaces by length, and then match earrings and rings by colour. It's great that colour is coming back; it's a refreshing change from the metallic, minimal, streamlined aesthetic that's been around for a while. ■

**For more jewellery trends, visit REDONLINE.CO.UK**





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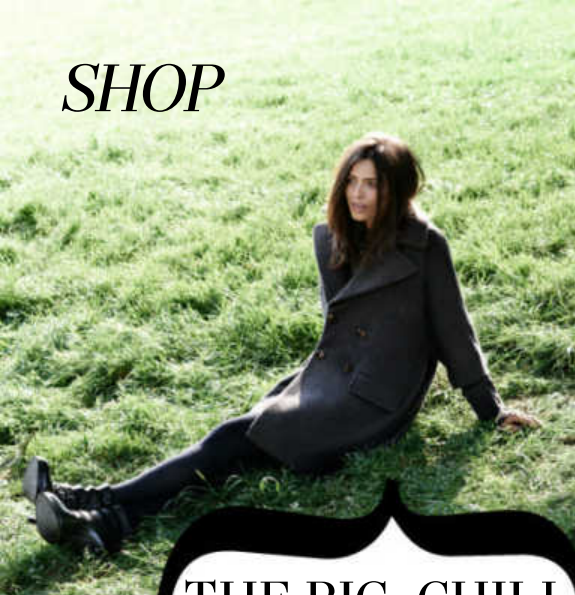
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## THE BIG-CHILL STYLE FIX



**Wool felt hat,** £29, Monsoon

**Polyester quilted jacket,** £119, Barbour

**Wool-mix scarf,** £290, Gucci at Net-A-Porter

**Denim jeans,** £235, AG at Harrods

**Leather and suede boots,** £225, Ugg

Travel in style in a Range Rover; [landrover.com](http://landrover.com)



**= Total cold-weather perfection**



**Suede shoes,** £605

**Cork and leather shoes,** £545

**Leather shoes,** £950, all Edgardo Osorio for Salvatore Ferragamo

## A FERRAGAMO FIRST

Salvatore Ferragamo brings us a fabulous collection in collaboration with Edgardo Osorio, the creative director of luxury shoe brand Aquazzura. Choose from 11 styles inspired by Ferragamo classics, some of which were designed for his clients such as Marilyn Monroe and Mae West. *At selected stores nationwide and [ferragamo.com](http://ferragamo.com)*

## FASHION NEWS



**READER OFFER**

**Shearling coat,** £380, Atterley

Online fashion brand Atterley is offering *Red* readers a chance to buy this season's must-have shearling coat with an exclusive 25% discount, available until December 31st. Go to [atterley.com](http://atterley.com) and use the code RED25 at the checkout. Happy shopping!



## SEEING STARS

The exclusive Miranda Kerr collection for Swarovski is top of our last-minute Christmas shopping list. This sweet star stud and charm necklace set is just perfect for emergency gifting.

**Rhodium and Swarovski crystal earrings and necklace set,** £79, Swarovski



**Viscose and bead Thurley vest,** £70, owned by Olivia Palermo

## WARDROBES 4 WOMEN

If you've ever coveted a celebrity wardrobe (yep, us too), your fashion wish is about to be granted. Designer resale site Vestiaire Collective is partnering with 12 style influencers including Olivia Palermo, Dree Hemingway and Keira Knightley, all of whom will be selling wardrobe pieces to raise funds and awareness for Women for Women International, a charity providing vital support to women who have survived war. *All proceeds go to Women for Women International. Visit [vestiairecollective.com](http://vestiairecollective.com) from December 3rd to 14th*

**Leather Mary Katrantzou bag,** £325, owned by Caroline Issa, both at Vestiaire Collective



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ROSIE GREEN

# Where's the off switch?

Texting, emailing, phoning – our columnist is having a tech-induced meltdown. All she wants is a little bit of shhhhh...



**INCOMING.** WAH WAH WAH: The world's most sensitive smoke alarm is alerting me to the fact the toast's gone one Pantone shade above golden. **PING:** Text reminder of girls' night that requires buying overdue birthday gifts from last January and oh Christ... that clashes with a work do and gulp... the babysitter is still pending... **RING:** Due to diarising error (mine), irate husband has arrived at a friend's house for their child's birthday party 168 hours (seven days) early. **SUBTLY DIFFERENT PING:** Email announcing it's 100% necessary to order that sofa I've been lusting after since Miliband (David) was still a contender by, like, now, before the 20% off expires.

So bombarded is my limbic system, my synapses are backfiring like Del Boy's Reliant Regal. And what happens when you are overloaded? You do non-rational things that instantly make your life a whole lot harder.

My favourite example of this was my friend A who, having woken up late, was so busy mentally working through the very important presentation that was occurring in 34.09 minutes, she hastily pulled the door shut on her boyfriend's flat. Only to realise she had left her handbag inside said flat and had no keys to get back in, nor to open the communal door out. She was stuck in 4ft of hallway and reduced to shouting out of the letterbox until some kindly passer-by registered a strange squeaking at hip level and called her amour to come home and release her.

There is nothing – *nothing* – worse than making an overload-induced faux pas. It's a unique physiological feeling – first your core temp rises by 20 degrees, then you start prickling all over. Finally you get the sweats.

I'm experiencing those bodily sensations now remembering last week's multi-tasking mail malfunction. Via email I was trying to impress Jo, a new business contact. I was also trying to maintain order over five under-10s and keep their hands off my new Mulberry wallpaper while chatting to a friend.



'There is nothing worse than making an OVERLOAD-INDUCED faux pas'

I was mid composing an email to Jo, when I was distracted by my mate's story of how their child's suitcase narrowly avoided being detonated by an overzealous US immigration officer. This is the result...

**To:** Jo Dover  
**From:** Rosie Green  
**Subject:** Re: Another project!  
 Hi Jo, How lovely to hear from you. Project sounds very exciting – currently in... Gruffalo Trunki.

**To:** Rosie Green  
**From:** Jo Dover  
**Subject:** Re: Another project!  
 Hi Rosie, Are you okay in there? Am hoping conditions are not too cramped and oxygen is sufficient. Jo

Argghhh. Still not as bad as my friend V, who while working at a top law firm, sent her boyfriend a message about what a witch her boss was and how she had dodged off early under the guise of attending a religious festival but had, actually, gone to the hairdressers. As soon as she pressed send she had that primal shiver. She had sent it directly to her boss. She got an official warning.

Texts are no better. In the juggle of a conference call, organising a party for prepubescent boys and the opening of the door to the meter-reading guy, who hasn't sent their plumber/joiner/tennis coach some sign-off kisses?

And yes, phone calls can also be hazardous. Last week, while working from home, I simultaneously tried to make beef casserole in the manner of Annabel Karmel and conduct email ping pong with my financial adviser. 'Please call me,' I wrote, listing my landline number. Silence. Ten minutes later I called him. 'You gave me your mother's number,' he said with barely disguised mirth. Upon asking for the correct number, Mum had interrogated him CIA-style to ascertain his authenticity. Unconvinced, she refused to give out my details #awks. ■

Read more from Rosie  
 at [REDONLINE.CO.UK](http://REDONLINE.CO.UK)



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SWAROVSKI



SARFRAZ MANZOOR

## Am I a grown-up yet?

In his twenties, Sarfraz Manzoor assumed that his fortysomething self would have it all sorted. The reality? At 45, he's not even close



**'YOU KNOW YOU'RE GETTING OLD,' GOES THE OLD BOB HOPE JOKE, 'WHEN THE CANDLES COST MORE THAN THE CAKE.'**

I will be 45 next birthday. This fact feels so utterly unbelievable that I had to have a short pause to look over that last sentence, because it didn't seem plausible. Forty-five is inarguably middle-aged.

When I was younger I assumed that by the time I was 45 I'd have things worked out, that the questions that troubled me during my teens, twenties and thirties – about what love was and how to find it, about how to live a creatively meaningful life and how to deal with my family without being driven to madness – would all be resolved.

I have spent so much of my life waiting for my life to truly begin. When I was in my twenties I was single and just starting on my career, so I was desperate to reach my thirties when, I assumed, things would really get going. And then I got to my thirties and I had girlfriends and a fairly decent career, but I didn't fully appreciate it because I thought grown-up life only started when one got married and had a family.

And now I find I have the whole package – the wife, the child and the mortgage – and yet, rather than feeling like I've reached the destination, I am suddenly reminded I'm on the start of another journey.

When I was young and began to panic about my health, I could tell myself I was a hypochondriac, but by the time you get to your forties you'd be daft not to be vigilant. I thought that after I found a woman willing to marry me, I'd learnt all I needed about love; but in fact the hardest questions – how to make love last amid the challenges of children and familiarity – are things I've yet to figure out.

I thought that once I had landed upon a job I loved, I knew all there was to know about work, and yet the harder challenge is not falling into a rut when you have been doing the same thing for two decades.

I thought, when I was a boy, that by the age of 45 I'd have worked out how to deal with my parents, and yet what I'd never contemplated is that I would lose my father while still in my early twenties, or that by the time I was 45 my mother would be in her early eighties and not only physically frail but also starting to fade mentally.

It is unnerving to be reaching 45 and to realise that, in many ways, I know less than I ever did. The only time I truly feel like an adult is when I am with my daughter. Laila is four years old, the age when children enjoy firing questions at their parents. It can be exhausting but also rather lovely because my daughter is young enough to assume I really do know everything – to her I am Google in human form.

There is a simplicity about her world. She still believes that every stranger would want to see the blazing-red autumn leaf she delightedly found on the street; when she sees a photograph of our wedding day and asks where she is and I reply that she was with the angels, she accepts this to be the truth.

One of the greatest pleasures of being a parent is that I get to vicariously enjoy a time when every question had a straightforward answer.

The rest of the time I feel like I am a continual work in progress. That, I have finally accepted, is how I am likely to always feel: being an adult is about understanding and embracing that I am never going to feel like I have it all sorted.

The truth is, as we get older, we don't get much nearer to discovering any answers – we just get faced with new questions. ■



**'I have spent so much of my life WAITING for my life to truly BEGIN'**

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# LET'S *TALK* ABOUT CAROLINE

She's the queen of Saturday night TV, but *The X Factor* star Caroline Flack won't be pigeonholed as the 'ditzy girl presenter'. From overcoming heartbreak to tackling her trolls head on, Kate Wills meets a woman who embraces the chaos »

Photographs CAMERON McNEE Styling LAUREN T FRANKS





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**A**nyone doubting whether Caroline Flack could possibly be as enthusiastic in person as she appears on TV should know that she spends our shoot gamely gambolling through meadows and snuggling puppies, only letting slip when it's all over that she suffers from hay fever and a phobia of dogs. She may be popping Piriton and breaking out in eczema, yet she's still singing along to the radio, cracking jokes and making the tea. Her Pollyannaish positivity is almost relentless. In fact, it can get her in trouble.

'The *Daily Star* did a front page saying, "Caroline says *Strictly* is the best show ever,"' she smiles ruefully, 'so I had to phone Simon [Cowell] and say, "This story's coming out tomorrow, I didn't say it." Then Grimmy [*The X Factor* judge Nick Grimshaw] said to me, "You probably did, because you say *everything* is the best thing ever."

If your inner cynic is rolling its eyes right now, self-aware Flack immediately heads it off by adding, with an infectious laugh, 'Oh God, I'm so annoying.'

Although it seems as though Flack landing her 'dream job' as co-host of *The X Factor* was only a matter of time (she hosted the *The Xtra Factor*, and last year won *Strictly*), she actually spent a decade trying to make it, sleeping on people's rodent-infested couches and auditioning for embarrassing mop commercials (and getting rejected). 'My career didn't really start until I was 30,' she says.

Now 36, her witty autobiography – *Storm In A C Cup* – documents a childhood where she couldn't afford pink tights for her ballet lessons, so dyed white ones with Ribena. Growing up in 'the middle of nowhere' in Thetford, Norfolk, with her twin sister Jody and an older brother and sister, her dad ran a company that made clothes and she describes her family as 'very working class'.

Flack left home at 16 after winning a scholarship to a dance school in Cambridge. And her twenties were filled with experiences that for many people would be 'what am I doing with my life?' moments – dressing up as a badger and being pelted with nuts on kids' TV, dating a robot for a gadget show, playing 'Topless blonde' in a Danny Dyer film – but for Flack they are 'the best job in the world' and 'a really fun experience'.

## BUT SOME THINGS DO PUNCTURE THE CHEERFUL VENEER.

She is remarkably candid in the book about realising that 'the whole ditzy-girl-presenter-thing' won't go on forever. And her break-up from music manager Jack Street, during the final weeks of *Strictly*, still feels raw, even talking about it now. 'It was such a bittersweet moment of winning the show, but also that feeling of, "Could you not have just waited three more weeks and then broken up with me?!"' she says. 'When I woke up the next day it was like someone had put clingfilm over my bed and I couldn't get up. I'd never felt like that before, numb, like everything had come to an end. And everyone was going, "Carrie! You've just won *Strictly*!" and I was like, "I know



**"I'm definitely a FEMINIST. I'd have thought that was quite OBVIOUS. Actually, I'm a people-ist"**

but I just don't feel happy." I was heartbroken. At the time it's all-consuming, but it gets better.'

She's now single 'but dating', and finding it 'quite weird. It gives you lots of anecdotes and stories to tell your friends. I can't really do Tinder, I might get some strange people. I've had a few stalkers in my time so it might be best not to'. Would she be put off dating someone in the public eye again? 'I don't care what they do – they could work in a shoe shop, they could work in politics, you can't help who you fall in love with, it just happens. I usually meet people through friends or through work. So...' she shouts to the room, 'anyone got any mates?!

Her *X Factor* co-presenter Olly Murs recently split from his girlfriend and the long-standing rumours of a romance between 'Colly Flurs' – as their fans call them – have gone into overdrive. 'All I get is, "You're the reason that Olly and his girlfriend broke up la-la-la!" But I haven't done anything! We have this weird chemistry and an innate understanding. It's not sexual but it's not platonic either. I do love him. It's kind of like we're married but we don't have sex... like most marriages then!'

It's shocking to read in Flack's own words what she went through in 2011 when she had a relationship with One Direction's Harry Styles, who at the time was 17 »

to her 32. She had her tyres slashed, was called ‘paedophile’ in the street and hounded by paparazzi.

‘It was horrendous,’ she says. ‘People were so nasty. It’s weird looking back on it now...’ Her eyes start to well up, which strikes me as odd considering she must still get asked about it so much, but I apologise for bringing it up. ‘That’s okay. The worst thing is that people are always like, [adopts annoying voice] “Why are you still talking about Harry Styles?” and I’m like, “I don’t want to talk about it, you arsewipe!”’

**IT’S HARD TO IMAGINE A MAN IN THE PUBLIC EYE GETTING AS HARD A TIME AS FLACK DID, JUST FOR DATING SOMEONE YOUNGER.** ‘The media will always be sexist,’ she agrees. ‘The way women get talked about in some publications is shocking.’ When I ask if she’s a feminist she almost looks offended. ‘Definitely. I’d have thought that’s quite obvious. Actually, I’m a people-ist. It’s about equality for everyone.’

Simon Cowell once told Flack she looked ‘studenty’ and it’s near impossible to believe she’s 36. At 5’ 4” (with size-two feet) she’s wearing a Topshop denim pinafore and could easily pass for 21. ‘Even when I was 15 I looked nine.’ And she doesn’t feel the pressure to settle down. ‘We’ve got the rest of our lives to be old! If I wanted to have a child, I could have one or I could adopt.’

Flack has a huge following on social media (1.83 million on Twitter and 682k on Instagram), where she posts selfies, funny quotes and the occasional ‘accidental’ nipple flash. ‘It’s all just pretend,’ she admits. ‘You can have the saddest day you’ve ever had and then put a picture of yourself going [mimes a star jump and a ridiculous grin] and everyone thinks, “Oh, she’s got such a good life.”’ She does read the comments, although they’re often brutal. ‘I never take them to heart, they’re just loonies. I’m immune to it. You realise they’re just unhappy people who write nasty things.’

But she does worry about the Kardashian effect on teenagers today. ‘There’s a lot of pressure with young girls and Instagram to do the right angles, look thin, look like they’re pop stars. And my 10-year-old niece, Willow,



**‘The media will always be sexist,’ says Flack; with co-presenter Olly Murs**

is now on Instagram and I just feel like she’s too young. Without offending anybody, there are these Instagram idols out there who aren’t like the idols we had as kids.’

Last Christmas, Flack was in her ‘clingfilm’ phase. And she’s not looking forward to this year either. ‘There’s so much pressure on it to be the best time of the year. My parents aren’t together [her mum and dad split in 2007 after 42 years of marriage] so it’s really hard to see

everybody and it highlights all the things you haven’t got. I’ve always thought maybe I’ll volunteer on Christmas Day or go away somewhere hot.’

But before then, there’s the small matter of hosting the (other) biggest show on TV. How anxious does she get knowing she’s going out live to many millions? ‘You do your best work when you’re nervous. I’m a massive over-prepper. I learn it off by heart in case something goes wrong. Knowledge is power, my dad taught me that.’

**“ I do love Olly Murs. It’s kind of like we’re MARRIED but we don’t have SEX... like most marriages then! ”**

Although she says she doesn’t read things about herself in the press any more, she recently tweeted a celebrity magazine to ‘Fuck off’, after they published a story saying she looked pregnant in a baggy top. ‘I try not to engage, but now and again, if they catch me in the wrong mood... Do not say I look pregnant. You don’t know what I was doing the day before or after. Maybe

I am pregnant or maybe I *was* pregnant. Things like that really piss me off. You know nothing about what’s going on in my life. I know I shouldn’t rise to it but I’m impulsive. Then I’ll call my twin sister Jo and say “Oh my God, I’ve done something bad but I couldn’t help it!” She says, “You know what, Carrie? You’re just human.”’

In an age when celebrities are so media-trained to fit the mould, Flack is resolutely herself, nipple selfies and all. ‘You don’t go through life trying to be a certain way because you work in telly,’ she says. ‘I’m far from perfect.’ Isn’t that what everyone likes about her? She smiles shyly, looking down at her tea. ‘Yeah, hopefully.’

*Storm In A C Cup by Caroline Flack (Simon & Schuster, £20) is out now, and The X Factor finale takes place on Sunday December 13th, on ITV*

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# Red

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Photograph Max Abadian

RED, THE FEBRUARY ISSUE, ON SALE JANUARY 1ST

NAZ SHAH WAS SIX WHEN  
HER FATHER LEFT.

15 WHEN SHE WAS FORCED  
INTO MARRIAGE.

18 WHEN HER MOTHER  
WAS ARRESTED.

41 WHEN SHE BECAME  
AN MP

Naz Shah's journey to the Palace of Westminster defies every stereotype. Despite deprivation and family tragedy, the new Labour MP for Bradford West remains a determined optimist.  
Gaby Hinsliff meets a woman on a mission

*Photographs CHRIS FLOYD*

**N**az Shah is rummaging in her bright-pink handbag for her phone, keen to show me a text message a friend sent to her recently. It turns out to be a motto summing up the kind of mother she wants to be to her three children: 'Be who you needed when you were younger.'

'I thought, that sums it up for me. Who I needed, what I didn't have, was knowing that you're safe, there's no threat,' says the Labour MP for Bradford West.

Naz Shah's story is an almost fairy-tale saga of triumph over adversity, her childhood experiences as terrifying as

anything The Brothers Grimm could have imagined. Yet this has surely been the year of her happy ending.

Last Christmas, she wasn't even a parliamentary candidate. But by spring, Shah was tackling the Respect Party MP George Galloway in perhaps the most bitterly fought contest of the 2015 election. Now she's a campaigning MP who had, just before we meet, been using her own past experience of living on the breadline to challenge a government minister over welfare cuts.

It all started in March 2015, when the Labour candidate selected to fight the local seat backed out, >>





creating a last-minute vacancy in Shah's home town. She was selected – and published, via a local news website, an open letter about her childhood that went viral.

No wonder. Shah was six years old when her father ran off with a neighbour's daughter, leaving her mother Zoora – who had two young children and a third on the way – humiliated in the eyes of her community. The family moved 14 times in two years, from one damp rat-infested lodging to another, until a local married man offered to help her mother buy a home. But he turned out to be violent and abusive, demanding sexual favours from the terrified Zoora.

Fearing her abuser was developing a sexual interest in her daughter, Shah's mother sent her to live with relatives in Pakistan at 12, only to see her forced into marriage to a cousin aged just 15.

## SHAH CAME BACK TO BRITAIN SHORTLY AFTERWARDS, BUT THE FAMILY'S TROUBLES WERE FAR FROM OVER.

She was still a teenager when her mother, apparently afraid that her abuser would attack her youngest daughter, finally cracked, and poisoned him.

Too ashamed to tell the full story of his abuse in court, Zoora was jailed for murder. Shah was left to raise her brother Amrahz and sister Fozia, then aged 13 and 11, while fighting to free her mother (who ended up serving 14 years in prison).

'I knew it would come out, but that it would come out the way the Respect Party wanted it to come out – "murderer's daughter" – and I'd be damned if that was going to happen,' Shah, 42, says now of her decision to reveal such an intimate story. 'I own my narrative, it's mine, and I'm not going to have a man form it.'

She was hoping, she says, to get it all out of the way early. But instead her life story came to dominate the campaign as she found herself effectively branded a liar by the Galloway camp, accused of exaggerating her suffering.

Even friends who defended her on social media received violent threats – and what she still finds shocking is that her worst critics were women.

Yet she never doubted she was going to win: 'God, I was a winner! I was taking Galloway out,' she says.

Only on the eve of Shah's election did it really sink in just how far she had come. Her brother summoned her to what he called an important campaign meeting. 'It turned out it was just me, my brother and my sister. We had the lights off, candles burning, and we just spoke the name of Allah (Shah says while she's a non-practising Muslim, she has a strong faith) and that was probably the most emotional experience of my campaign.

'These were my siblings, I'd raised them; I remembered when we used to live on Pot Noodles, and here I am on



'I own my narrative, it's mine, and I'm not going to have a man form it,' says Shah

the eve of a general election and potentially going to be the next MP for Bradford West.'

In the end, Shah won with a crushing 11,420 majority. Having gone home to get some sleep while the votes were counted, she was woken by a 2am call from a friend saying she'd won. 'I rang my mum and said, "Mum, I've done it," and she just cried.'

The next urgent decision was what to wear for her acceptance speech. 'There was a suit I'd saved, that one of my best friends had given me when my son was born. There was this debate over what I should wear because I'm normally in my jeans and I thought, "This is a suit that means something to me."

And so she wore it triumphantly to the count.

For her *Red* shoot, Shah looks stunning in a salwar kameez, though when we meet she's wearing the classic female MP's uniform of black trousers and smart monochrome jacket. But seven months at Westminster certainly haven't turned Naz Shah into just another clone. Frank, unguarded and happy to answer anything – all while polishing off a fry-up from the House of »

I'm BLESSED, despite every experience I've gone through. I'm still here. Having the POWER to influence is amazing





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Commons canteen – she belongs to a new breed of MP who didn't rise smoothly up the ranks as a special adviser, but smashed their way in from the outside.

If she reminds me of anyone it's Mhairi Black, the 21-year-old SNP MP who had been working in a chip shop before she snatched a safe seat from Labour. And Shah, who worked in a laundry and at a crisp-packing factory, is aware that her experience of poverty gives her something other politicians lack.

When we meet, she's fuming about government proposals to restrict child tax credits to two children, which will, she thinks, catch people who had larger families in good times but then found their circumstances changed. It's something she lived through herself, having remarried and had children with her second husband, only to lose her NHS job.

'We had two of us on good working incomes, a nice house, we made that choice to have a third child – but then I was made redundant because of the austerity crisis. There was a lot of pressure, my marriage broke up because of it, and I was left a single parent with three children.'

Apart from fighting welfare cuts, her other priority is tackling Islamophobia and the way innocent Muslims are caught up in a backlash against extremists.

She was thrilled by Nadiya Hussain winning *The Great British Bake Off* – 'I love that girl, she's probably done more for race relations and breaking down barriers with that BBC programme than a lot of things' – but she still worries about tensions in the community.

As for the recent turmoil within Labour, Shah backed Yvette Cooper for leader, both because she was worried Jeremy Corbyn was merely standing to spark debate and because she liked the idea of 'giving a woman a chance'. She swears she's been pleasantly surprised by Corbyn, but is frustrated by being in opposition: 'We can't carry on having debates. We've got to be pragmatic.'

**NONETHELESS, SHE'S SEEMINGLY TAKEN TO WESTMINSTER LIKE A DUCK TO WATER**, thriving in what can still be a rather clubby, subtly exclusive atmosphere for women. 'I felt like I'd come home!' she beams. 'I felt this is where I belonged. I got a really

warm welcome, even from the Tories.' It probably helps that she's bonded with several of the women in the new intake: 'We've got that solidarity between us, regardless of where we're at. We are very supportive.'

Shah's one gripe, as an early bird happy to be in the gym at 5am, is the late-night votes – famously not conducive to family life. She's away in London four nights a week: her mother, sister, brother and ex-partner take turns looking after her sons Raese, four, Aydan, eight, and 11-year-old daughter Leyana in Bradford. 'Their dad's brilliant with them. We are really on the same page when it comes to parenting.'

The minute she gets home, her time is her children's. 'They know when they're going to see me now and that

time becomes quality time, we do things together – we went to two weddings on Saturday. Then Sunday evenings are me-time, when I catch up with my friends; that's circled in gold.'

Her daughter is nearly the same age Shah was when she was sent overseas and is starting to ask questions about it, which has, Shah says, only made her more determined to ensure her children's lives are different.

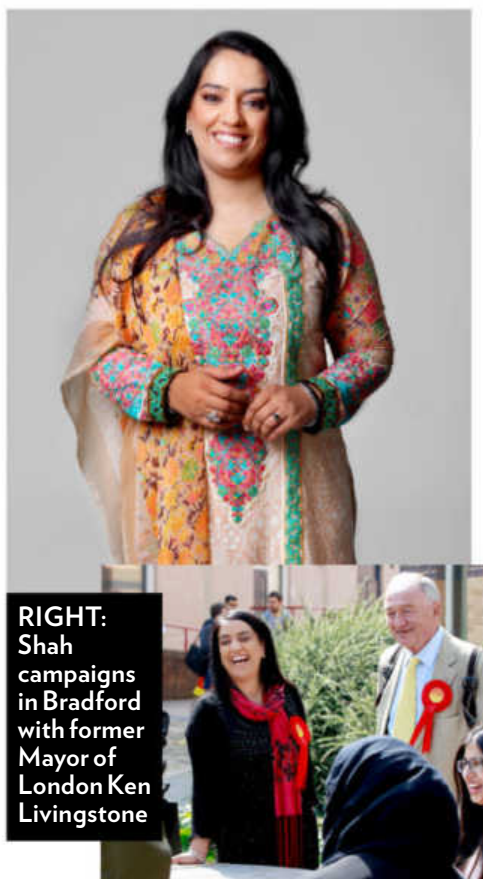
What's remarkable is that, despite her experiences, she remains a boundless optimist. She says that working as a Samaritans volunteer before getting selected made her see that others had it worse: 'I'm blessed, despite every experience I've gone through. I'm still here, I'm in a secure environment, the privilege that comes with it in terms of having the power to influence is amazing.'

Nor does she find it hard to trust men now. 'With my

ex-partner we had a wonderful 11 years together and we're still good friends. Do I not trust men? No, because not everybody's the same.

'And if I became a cynic... my biggest challenge in parliament is not my job, I know what my job is, it's to make a difference. My biggest challenge is remaining true to my values.' She worries that the bitter election campaign made her more thick-skinned but doesn't want to lose the openness that makes her different to other MPs.

'I suppose the thing I struggle with,' she says, 'is that wherever I go, even in 10 years, I'll always be the girl who beat Galloway.' Before long, she'll surely be known for much more than that. ■



**RIGHT:** Shah campaigns in Bradford with former Mayor of London Ken Livingstone



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# DON'T PANIC... IMPROVISE!

Why is Rosie Green pretending to be an egg? Because a spot of am-dram performance promises to help her real-world confidence... She's not convinced

**I** am being an egg. I am lying on a dusty floor in my much-loved, but perhaps on reflection overly dressy, black broderie anglaise dress and Rag & Bone boots. I am surrounded by cool kids in sweats.

It's a filthy London night at the fag end of Oxford Street and right now I would trade the entirety of my shoe collection to be mainlining Sauv Blanc on my sofa.

Why am I at an improv class? It's a cringe-

making, anxiety-inducing prospect but, deep inside, I have a pilot-light flicker of curiosity to see if it will, as the blurb promises, unlock some vein of creativity, help me with presentation skills and develop my authority in situations where there is no script.

While I've always been confident socially, I've noticed that the self-effacing side of my personality is getting out of control. Every email starts 'Sorry to' or 'I just...'. I've equated being submissive with being likeable (I know...).

This trait gets worse in a work environment. This is particularly bad news as I've recently started a business with friends and need to be confident in myself and my skills if I'm going to ask someone to invest in them.

And if being an egg can help with that, then I'll have to throw myself into the imaginary frying pan. Sizzle.

Jake Lyons, the attractive, twinkly-eyed class leader, is the only person in the room other than me to have been alive when Madonna released *Papa Don't Preach*. At the start, he welcomes me and my fellow embryos and we all smile nervously. I instantly feel guilty for shooing my kids into activity camps where they have to do awful things like pair up with a partner they don't know.

**WE ARE ASKED TO PAIR UP WITH PARTNERS WE DON'T KNOW.** And to play a game of *Simon Says*.

Double cringe. It is an icebreaker though, and soon we are all learning Jake's lesson number one – it can be fun to make mistakes. We can laugh at ourselves and our gaffes in a way that isn't corrosive to the soul.

We play another game where we stand in a circle and try to remember the name of another class member, call it out and walk towards them. I fight the urge to go to the loo and never come back. I am in a sweat trying

to ensure I get Paul, Jade and Peter's names correct. Jake watches us all as, hunched in embarrassment, we shuffle apologetically across the open space.

Then Jake introduces lesson two: 'actor's arrogance'. He talks about how body language can convey low status. Mimicking our stance, he demonstrates how you literally make yourself smaller when you're out of your comfort zone. Non-verbally you're communicating, 'I am not worthy'. And then, 'Doh', it's no surprise that people think you are actually not worthy.

Actor's arrogance is about standing up tall, with a confident, smiling, I-am-your-equal open expression. And because that is often not how you feel, it's about inhabiting an alternative persona.

An aside: I once interviewed Beyoncé – yes, beautiful, fearless Beyoncé – and she

'It's about  
being BRAVE  
enough to  
make yourself  
VULNERABLE'





said on stage she became her ultra-confident alter ego, Sasha Fierce. That seems to have worked out well for her.

I also remember being ditched by a boyfriend and feeling crap and then getting this surge of self preservation, going for a blow-dry, donning my best heels and telling him uber confidently in the manner of Hepburn that 'I know you love me', when I really didn't. That worked out well, too (I married him).

So I can attest that faking it 'til you make it works. It's just that over the years, life has eroded my chutzpah.

We practise our name game again, this time channelling our actor's arrogance. It makes an impressive difference in how you view the other person.

Then it's on to lesson three.

We are put into small groups and have to create a tableau (Jesus!) without conversing with each other. We are given the theme 'breakfast'.

I decide to be an egg. This consists of lying on the floor with my knees tucked underneath me, arms looped together and my head slightly raised to look like a yolk (!?).

I cannot be a convincing egg in so little time, or deliver a valuable contribution to the 'full English' with so little communication, but even just attempting it with the kids from *Fame* is liberating/terrifying/spirit-lifting.

## I AM NOW MORE RELAXED WITH JADE (BACON) AND PAUL (SAUSAGE).

trusting that they are not going to laugh at my oeuf skills. I realise as I contemplate a scuff mark on a floorboard, that we are often stymied by our habit of voraciously seeking perfection and that being placed in a position where you will never achieve it is good for you.

I reflect that since my thirties and the arrival of children, I have seen a successful life as being all about organising and troubleshooting potential problems, but I recognise now this is stifling my creativity. Stopping me taking risks and chances. And of course. Having. Fun.

Which I might just be in danger of having.

We then play a game of 'keepy uppy', trying to keep a beanbag airborne by slapping it upwards with the palms

of our hands. Because it's a game that requires such intensity of focus, we forget our paranoias and anxieties and enjoy being in the moment in a blissfully childish way.

## LESSON FIVE IS THE LAST AND MOST TERRIFYING OF ALL.

We all write random sentences and put them in a box. We have to stand up in pairs in front of the rest of the class. We are then given a scene to improvise, incorporating another person's random sentence into our role-play. Anna and I are cell mates riffing on a 'what are you in here for?' storyline when I pick up a note saying 'who farted?'. I grapple around for a way to incorporate it and I can sense the whole class rooting for me.

Keeping the dialogue flowing while my mind races,

I resort to toilet humour, introducing the phrase while gagging as if gassed and miming striking a match. But it works – I get a laugh.

I was forced to take a risk, and I rode out that stomach-churning limbo time and found my groove. Jake says it's about being brave enough to make yourself vulnerable. You can play too cool for school and thus immunise yourself from looking a total idiot, but unless you try, you also won't ever truly succeed. It's profound.

Suddenly, the two-hour class is over. I'm relieved to be going home, but I'm glad I did it. Walking through the sodden streets of Soho I'm heartened that you can make yourself vulnerable in front of strangers and emerge better equipped to deal with life.

A week later I'm given the opportunity to play out my improv learnings in real life. I'm invited to a dinner with Elle Macpherson. I've met her before and I castigated myself last time for my deferential body language (think Dobby with

a blow-dry). This time when we meet, I channel my actor's arrogance, stand tall, look Elle in the eye and act as an equal. And do you know what? She responds warmly, laughing, gossiping and dropping her guard to chat easily about her new life in Miami. It's a much more positive interaction than it was when I was in house-elf mode.

It's a life lesson learnt. And one which makes me think I may, one day, return for another class. But if I do (and it's a big if), next time I'm going to rethink the wardrobe. ■

To book an *Improvisation Class for Beginners* with Jake Lyons, visit [city-academy.com/improvisation-classes-beginners](http://city-academy.com/improvisation-classes-beginners)



## CAN'T (OR WON'T) MAKE CLASS?

*The best improv-inspired life hacks*

- You cannot help, but make 'mistakes' in improv, but they allow you to take

new and unexpected directions. This works in real life, too.

- Push yourself to go off script. Pre-empting every situation is never possible. Embrace new situations and life opens up with possibilities.

- Use actor's arrogance: head up, stand firm, big smile. It works. Others will gravitate to you.

- Perfection is the enemy of creativity. You'll never write the novel, launch the new business or attempt to paint that ugly old dresser if you constantly worry about stuffing up.



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A person's hand, wearing a black leather jacket, is visible on the right side of the page, holding a pair of glasses against a dark brown wooden fence. The background is a blurred outdoor scene with green foliage and a building.

# 'I LOVE DOING **THE SCENES** THAT ARE A **LITTLE BIT MORE** *outrageous*'

He was a Nineties icon, the eternal maverick and the bad boy we were all a little bit in love with. And now Christian Slater is back. He's a dad, he's settled down, but he's still as charmingly edgy as ever

Words ROSAMUND DEAN  
Photographs JAMES DIMMOCK

Conducting a celebrity interview is often an elaborate dance in which one attempts to unearth a kernel of authenticity from a person determined to reveal as little as possible about their personal life. Not so with Christian Slater, who, over the course of our conversation, waxes lyrical on fatherhood, women, homophobia, a difficult relationship with his parents and the years when his ego was 'out of control'.

He sets the tone early on when, during the usual preamble about jet lag and coffee, he catches a glimpse of my phone's screensaver: a picture of my son. 'Oh my goodness, so beautiful,' he exclaims, leaning in for a closer look. 'I'm probably going to have one of those in the future as well. I have two already, but I might go again, so I'm excited. Excited and scared!'

A frank declaration about trying for a baby when I've barely taken off my coat is not something that usually happens in this situation. But Slater doesn't feel the need to be anything other than himself. He's been around the block, having worked since he was nine years old, >>





playing the kind of wild-eyed, rebellious boys that made him the obsession of every teenager in the 1990s (me included). JD in *Heathers*, Hard Harry in *Pump Up The Volume*, Clarence in *True Romance* and even unruly Will Scarlett in *Robin Hood: Prince Of Thieves*.

‘You’ve got to play the guy who’s a little off his rocker, a little dangerous, a little unpredictable,’ laughs Slater, those Jack Nicholson-esque eyebrows shooting upwards. ‘I tried to play the outright heroic type, like in *Broken Arrow* (the 1996 drama about nuke-thieving terrorists), but I could tell John Travolta was having more fun than I was because he got to be the fun bad guy.’

**THE 46-YEAR-OLD MAN SITTING IN FRONT OF ME TODAY SEEMS AN UNLIKELY REBEL.** He looks very sharp in a crisp blue shirt and glasses, taking sporadic puffs on an e-cigarette. There is a ChapStick on the table in front of him, next to his iced latte. He could easily pass for a very neat academic. It’s funny that so many of his roles are about being on the outside of society and wanting to smash the system.

His latest is no exception. Hacking thriller *Mr Robot* has been one of the most talked-about TV dramas of the year, sparking a thousand thinkpieces about cyber crime. Slater stars as the titular Mr Robot, a mysterious anarchist who invites a disillusioned young hacker, Elliot (Rami Malek), into a shady collective intent on bringing down a huge corporation. If you’ve seen the show (it’s on Amazon Prime), you’ll realise the less you know about it in advance, the better. If you haven’t, I won’t ruin it. It’s the best-reviewed thing that Slater has been in for around 20 years, with *The Sunday Times* calling it ‘the year’s most compelling new TV show’.

It must be refreshing for Slater to be enjoying great reviews since, despite his iconic roles in the 1990s, he has, let’s be frank, been in some turkeys. ‘I’d done other shows that hadn’t worked as well as we would have liked, and they’re always frustrating and disheartening experiences,’ he admits. ‘There were times when I had to work. Of course you have to. It’s how you make a living and you have children. It’s part of being an adult. I don’t think it is for anybody always a pleasure to go to work. But this show has touched a nerve and people are identifying with it. All those other experiences? They weren’t mistakes because they’ve only made this one more appreciated.’

We have *Mr Robot*’s creator, Sam Esmail, to thank for putting Slater back in a juicy role. ‘Sam has made a lot of out-of-the-box choices with the show, and it’s refreshing,’ Slater agrees, before veering off to talk about Robert Downey Jr’s recent success with the *Iron Man* franchise. ‘You’d never have thought of Robert Downey Jr as being a guy you could rely on. I mean, it was a huge risk! But

“  
In this business  
you get spoiled and  
ENTITLED and your ego  
can get out of control.  
You get SCREWED up

”


somehow Jon Favreau was able to convince the studio, and it worked.’

It’s a fair comparison. There was a point when Slater, like Downey

Jr, was in danger of being better known for his drinking-related brushes with the law than for his work. He says his children (Jaden, 16, and Eliana, 14, with ex-wife Ryan Haddon) are what turned his life around.

‘They made me less selfish,’ he says. ‘Look, I can’t paint myself as saintly in any way. But I love my kids and I’m constantly reminding myself that I am 46 and I have to grow up. I’ve spent a lot of years being a baby, acting like a kid. In this business you get spoiled and entitled and your ego can get out of control. You just get screwed up.’

He pauses as another iced latte is placed in front of him, giving him time to collect his thoughts, before continuing. ‘There comes a point where it’s down to me to actually begin the journey of becoming the man that I’m supposed to be because, if I keep going in this other direction, then it’s not going to be pretty.’ He’s talking in the present tense, but I get the feeling he’s thinking of a specific point in his past. ‘I have two choices here,’ he continues. ‘I know where this road leads, so why don’t I try



this other road and try and be a little bit more mature and a little bit more prepared? And now I find that the pendulum definitely swings to the other end. Now I'm a bit of a neat freak. I don't really let my wife in the kitchen.'

The wife, with whom he is planning fatherhood round two, is 28-year-old business-development consultant Brittany Lopez. They married in 2013, ending a bachelor period that began when he and Haddon announced their separation in 2004. In-between, Slater famously (and some might say incongruously) dated British former Jimmy Choo boss Tamara Mellon for two years. He actually spent a lot of time in the UK, starring in a stage version of *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* in London's West End. Any chance he'll come back? 'My wife and I were talking about that yesterday,' he grins. 'To come here and do another play would just be phenomenal. I'd kill for that. I love this city so much.'

The feeling's mutual. Last month, *True Romance* was reissued at cinemas nationwide as part of the BFI's Love season, giving audiences another chance to catch the crazy, sexy classic on the big screen. Slater says he 'couldn't have been more proud' of his *True Romance* co-star Patricia Arquette's Oscar win for *Boyhood*, and that she used the platform to campaign for equal pay for women. He's fully supportive of any campaign for parity not only in pay, but also in the representation of women on screen.

**'THE FRUSTRATING THING ABOUT OUR SOCIETY IS WE ARE SLOW TO CHANGE** the direction of the ship,' he sighs. 'It's a big ship, and to get people to change their attitudes is difficult. It was the same with gay rights and equal marriage. You think, "How could it have taken so long for that to happen?" It makes me feel sad about our culture. But progress is possible. It's inevitable, because the more you try to repress something, the bigger it gets. I think things are at least heading in the right direction.'

I imagine him hanging out with Arquette, discussing the big issues over dinner but, although they get on well when they see each other, he doesn't spend a lot of time with other actors (not even *Heathers* co-star Winona Ryder, who will always be his girlfriend in my head). Instead, he says, 'You've really got to find a life outside of the business in order to be able to survive the business.'

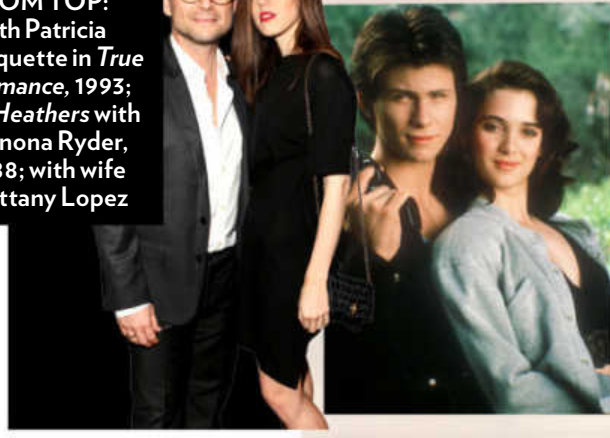
He describes his morning routine in such detail, I feel he's quite particular about it. 'I get up, preheat the oven and walk the dogs. Then, by the time I'm back, I put the bacon in the oven for my son, wake him, make his cheesy eggs and get him out of the door for school.' I tell Slater his son is a lucky kid, and he laughs uproariously. 'Spoilt rotten! Oh my god. He has no idea how good he's got it. My father never made me eggs!'

He throws that last remark out like a joke, but it's heartbreaking when you know the context. Slater had

Now I'm a bit  
of a NEAT freak.  
I don't really let  
my WIFE in  
the kitchen



**CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP:** With Patricia Arquette in *True Romance*, 1993; in *Heathers* with Winona Ryder, 1988; with wife Brittany Lopez




a tricky relationship with his parents (producer Mary Jo Slater and actor Michael Hawkins), particularly his father, from whom he was estranged for nine years before recently reconnecting.

'My parents are definitely showbusiness people,' he says, carefully. 'My father's an actor, so he was always a colourful type. But my kids have helped me build a better relationship with my parents. Mother-son relationships can be tricky, and complicated. But my son loves my mother so much. He just really helped build that bridge.'

This is a man who's worked out the important things in life. Interestingly, when I ask about his career highlights, he tells me a story about a man who approached him recently to say that *Pump Up The Volume* helped him survive high school. 'He was gay,' explains Slater, 'and that was the first movie he'd seen where homosexuality wasn't dealt with in a judgemental way. It was ahead of its time. My career highlights are really when you get to see how things that you've done have actually had some kind of impact on a person's life.'

Does he still feel like a rebel? 'I don't think so,' he laughs. 'Fortunately I get to channel all that energy into a character. I love doing the scenes that are a little bit more outrageous, it's therapeutic. But, most of the time, I'm just walking the dogs and making my kid breakfast.'

It's Christian Slater 2.0, and we like this version even more. 

*Mr Robot* is available exclusively on Amazon Prime

See Christian Slater's  
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# ‘SEX IS ALL MY HUSBAND AND I HAVE IN COMMON’

Can an exhilarating sex life make up for a relationship of differences? This anonymous writer reveals the ecstatic highs and lonely lows of such a marriage

**N**ew York’s Chelsea Hotel. Snow. A Christmas party. Wearing an LBD and Manolo Blahnik hound’s-tooth knee-high (‘result’) boots. The scene was set for my life-changing moment.

In the lead-up to the party that night – December 10th 2001 – I’d left work early, had my hair done at a glamorous uptown hair salon and been for an interview at the actual *The Devil Wears Prada* building in Times Square. I was feeling like all was right with the world.

I’d been living in New York for a year and a half and just two month’s earlier tragedy had changed the landscape in every way: 9/11. Before, I had merely been one of many transient travellers, here to gulp in the frantic energy, drink cocktails and thrive in the ultimate *Sex And The City*.

After 9/11, it was like we’d been turned inside out. Every person in the city was raw with grief, but it manifested with us being generous to each other. We were bonded.

Until then I’d been dating a ludicrously young (22 to my 35) Cuban banker, in the usual New York style, ie. we hadn’t had the ‘exclusive’ conversation yet.

That night, Otto\* walked in with a male friend. They were both dark, swarthy Latin Americans and I wasn’t the only woman in the room to notice. He told me later he didn’t see me at first but clocked my footwear (result for a reason!) and heard me giggling. He uttered to a friend, ‘if that laugh belongs to the girl in those boots I’ll marry her’.

We spent the rest of that party snogging like 14-year-olds. It was exhilarating, the sexual chemistry intense >>

and uncomplicated. That night he left with my business card and I left with my dignity intact.

The next morning I arrived at work to find a poem on my desk. It spoke of love and longing and was written on paper that looked practically Shakespearean – dipped in tea and scorched on all sides. Later that day a parcel of handmade biscuits arrived with an invitation to dinner.

As soon as we saw each other we were madly kissing. It was a two-hour lip lock that led to a passionate, sex-filled night. It felt so natural, so intense; the earth moved – literally. We fell out of bed, twice! You know that look people have when they've had the best lay of their life? The next day, I had it in spades. A week later he proposed.

We did marry – but not until five years later – in which time we'd had a roller-coaster love affair, a baby and a separation, which resulted in us crossing continents to be together. Ours was an intense relationship, one of cultural differences and difficulties. And it still is. But the glue that has always held us close? Our sex life. We are passionate, fiery people in the bedroom. The lust between us is instinctual, uninhibited, libido-matched. That first time, I loved the way he smelt – I still do. But I often wonder what would happen if our sexual chemistry disappeared.

**S**ix weeks after our first meeting I found out I was pregnant (there was a huge spike in the birth rate a year after September 11th, go figure). The zeitgeist of this emotionally heightened time had definitely fast-forwarded our relationship. But Otto was delighted. I was delighted. There was no doubt I wanted to be a mum.

This is where things became real – we were embarking on a new life together. The disagreements became harsher and more urgent. New Yorkers are famously direct (rude), he thought I was ridiculously sensitive. What did we argue about? Everything, from should we marry before the baby or after, to what shall we eat for dinner, money, to-do lists, apartments, dogs. You name it, we'd bicker about it.

Our obvious differences are religion, upbringing, and life expectations – all things that are thrown into sharp relief when you are starting a family. He is Catholic, I'm Jewish; he grew up on the streets, I went to boarding school; I love and value my close family and friends; he is a lone wolf.

We didn't disagree for the sake of it, we genuinely approached life differently. I swiftly learnt any mention of another man resulted in jealous accusations. I now know this is a typical Latin response. He thinks I am catnip to every red-blooded man, but I have always had male friends that I don't share a mattress with. Yin and Yang – that's what we were and still are – but it can make you feel unintentionally misunderstood and then horribly lonely.

There were many times I felt trapped with responsibility and little support, particularly looking after a baby in

a country where I had few friends, no family and no job. Having a young child can test the most solid of relationships: patience and understanding are paramount in that first year and these qualities are tested when you are still getting to know one another.

There was no doubt he was a wonderful, loving father. We were his universe and his intense focus, which exacerbated our friction points: it was always just the three of us in our tiny apartment. Things came to a head when our daughter was two. I came home to England for a family event and realised how alone and unhappy I felt in New York, so, when I returned, I told Otto I had to move back.

Because our union is the way it is, the encouragement, love and support of my friends and family is hugely important to my peace of mind. We spent five months apart but eventually Otto followed and we fell into one another full of desire. Sex brought us back together again.

Over the years I have looked at my friends who have an easy camaraderie with their partners – and had a pang of envy. Their lives appear to be calm, happy and in sync. Mine is a minefield.

## OTTO IS A BELIEVER IN THE TOUGH-LOVE SCHOOL OF PARENTING AND I AM OF THE 'LOVE PLUS

### MORE LOVE' PARENTING STYLE, so I worry

he is sometimes too harsh with our daughter. And if he can't get hold of one of us at all times, even though we might be at school or work, he panics and then angers easily.

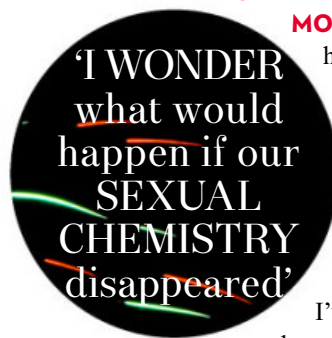
I know these tics come from a place of love or fear, but I spend my life either ecstatic or exhausted.

When I have confided to mates that I've had doubts, they always reply 'but he loves you', and he does. And I him. It's just not the relationship I had expected.

We have now been lovers for 14 years and the sex is still exceptional. It has changed – if anything we've become naughtier, more daring. We are honest about wanting new things and giving each other pleasure. Don't get me wrong, we are not at it like rabbits, we can go for a couple of weeks without sex but when we come together it is always an incredible experience. Passion is our bond and fortunately, for now, it remains undiminished.

Can lust conquer all? He's not easy, but neither am I. If we didn't have our daughter I don't think we would have stayed the course. Partnership is hard, compromise can be thin on the ground when you are tired. We still argue, but having a child to work at it for is galvanising.

We have both learnt how to fight fair (or fairer), we try and find resolution, refrain from antagonising and carry on loving even when we don't understand one another. At the end of the day he is the love of my life and I want to grow old loving only him. But I'll always have that nagging doubt, is a great sex life enough? Perhaps I'll never know. ■



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# THE SCARS THAT MAKE ME

An agonising childhood accident reshaped Petina Gappah's feet forever, but it also gave her a determination to be noticed on her own terms

**A**t my brother's wedding a few years ago, an older cousin reminded me of my childhood dream. I was amused he remembered; it was such an absurd ambition. For two years in the early 1980s, in the wake of Zimbabwe's independence, I'd wanted nothing more than to be a ballerina.

I was to be bigger than Fonteyn. The great English ballerina Dame Alicia Markova would weep at my Sugar Plum Fairy. (I knew she was still alive because I'd looked her up at the local Queen Victoria Memorial Library.) And as for my Odette/Odile, I could see myself in a series of grand jetés – doing the splits in mid-air, before gliding down gracefully and sending my adoring audience at Sadler's Wells into a rapture of delight.

I was completely caught up in this dream because ballet was not just about the beautiful floating pink tutus or the tensile grace of the ballerina. Ballet represented for me the possibility of beautiful feet.

## I GREW UP WITH TWO REACTIONS TO MY FEET.

From the adults would come exclamations of pity and horror, sometimes with the hand clapped to the mouth. From the children, gawking curiosity and fascination,

and always the question, accompanied by a pointing finger: 'What happened to your feet?' and, from the more intrepid: 'Oooh, can I touch them, can I, oooh, can I?' Ballet promised an escape from that unwanted attention.

I was born with normal feet that could have become like my mother and my sisters': slender and graceful, flexibly curving into the dancer's arch. Then, one day, four years and eight months after I was born, I stepped into a pit of hot embers, and they took on a new shape.

I have happy memories of moving as a child between the village where my grandmother lived and the capital, Salisbury (as Harare was called pre-independence), where my father had a house. But I have no memory of the day that I burned and scarred my feet. What I have are planted memories from the recollections of my parents and my grandmother.

It happened in the gusty month of August, when winds sweep across the countryside in a whirl of dust storms and dancing leaves and send clothes on the washing lines swaying and twisting into themselves. Because of the season, my grandmother Mbuya VaNdada was careful about burning rubbish. That afternoon, she picked up and gathered together the daily detritus, the maize husks »

and cobs, the peanut and groundnut shells and other rubbish that was to be burned.

But in the process, she scooped up the five or so maize cobs I'd been playing with. I had no toys in those days. My playthings were found objects or implements for daily use, and I particularly liked to play with discarded cobs of dried maize that I'd pretend were dolls. On that day, my grandmother took the cobs I'd been playing with. I asked her, 'Mbuya, where are my dollies?' 'Do you mean those cobs?' she said. 'I burned them in the pit.'

I walked to the pit. There was no fire, only ash. I thought they were under all that ash. So I stepped in to rescue them.

If there had been a plastic surgeon or a burns specialist nearby, perhaps something might have been done to save my feet, but the closest clinic was a rural clinic in one of the poorest sections of the country. My right foot suffered fourth-degree burns that reached through the skin to the tendons and bone. The outside of my right foot was burned so badly that the smallest two toes lost their nails. They have never grown back. Those two toes are raised and completely unable to touch the ground when I stand. The skin around these toes calloused and hardened. The pain was so great that I fainted several times that day.

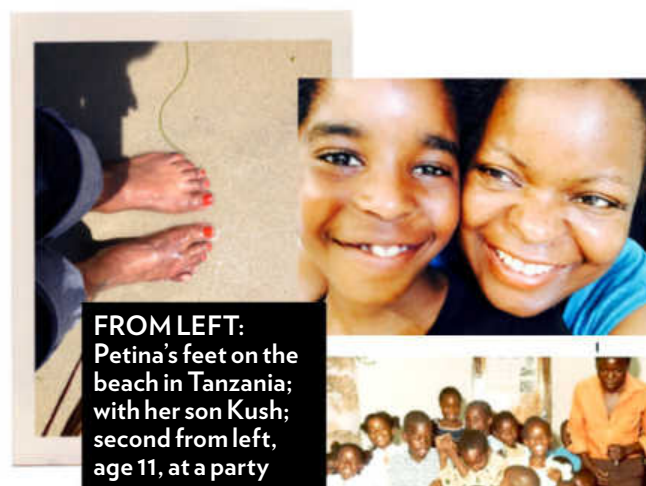
## I BELIEVE THAT THE CURIOUS DICHOTOMY IN MY CHARACTER CAME FROM MY WOUNDED FEET.

As a child and teenager, I had a horror of being looked at. For as long as I can remember, I have wanted to disappear, to be unnoticed, and yet my driven and focused nature was such that I simply could not help but do the things that got me noticed. I inherited my father's iron will to succeed at whatever I put my hand to, but at the same time, my father's indomitability has lived alongside an absolute horror of being noticed. For if I am noticed, the flaws will be evident. The scars will be foremost.

This is where ballet came in. I daydreamed about being a ballerina, being on stage, a dancer with beautiful feet. I wanted to be noticed on my terms.

Now I laugh at the sheer preposterousness of my ballerina dreams. At the time I was imagining myself as the next Margot Fonteyn, I had not taken a single ballet class. Indeed, I only saw my first full ballet after I left Zimbabwe at the age of 23. But I knew all the composers. I knew the stories. I knew the five positions for the feet, and the positions des bras for each. I knew all this because I had the combination of a vivid imagination and a desperate desire to get away from my ugly, distorted feet.

In time, I came to accept my feet are not as ugly as they seemed as a child. I came to see that they're a wonderful part of my story. I've stopped hiding them. Like me, they are flawed, but serviceable. It also does not hurt at all to have beautiful shoes to adorn them as long as I buy just the



FROM LEFT: Petina's feet on the beach in Tanzania; with her son Kush; second from left, age 11, at a party

“  
The PAIN was  
so great that  
I FAINTED several  
times that day  
”



right kind of shoes: wide enough to accommodate the wounded flesh on one foot while also being narrow enough to fit the other, less damaged foot. I joke there's only a handful of cobblers that fit this very specific requirement, among them Christian Louboutin and Prada, Maison Margiela and Robert Clergerie. And I quite cheekily ask for discounts when I get a pedicure: I have, after all, only eight toenails.

I realise now that my feet are probably less damaged than those of many ballet dancers. One of the Christmas traditions I have with my 11-year-old son Kush in Geneva, where we live, is that we go to see *The Nutcracker*. In the year Kush turned seven, we sat just behind the pit, and had a beautiful view of the heads of the orchestra and every dancer's expression. But we also saw every sweat bead and heard how heavily the dancers landed. Every time the ballerinas soared and then landed with a thump, I thought, 'Goodness, their poor feet'.

## I UNDERSTAND NOW WHAT I DID NOT KNOW AS A CHILD – that dancers' feet suffer from all sorts of damage: calluses and corns, bunions and black nails.

I understand that the silken slippers hide a world of pain.

In May this year, as a treat for finishing my first novel, *The Book Of Memory*, I took myself to Venice for the opening weekend of the Art Biennale. On a little cobbled street just behind St Mark's Square, I saw a beautiful pair of sandals in Pollini. It was love at first try. 'Are you sure my scar is not too visible?' I asked the assistant. He'd asked about my feet after I took off my old shoes, and I had told him the story. 'Not at all,' he said, 'but even if your scar is visible, why should you worry? You are a survivor.'

I bought the shoes, put them on and walked to St Mark's Square. From an outside café, I ordered an Aperol Spritz. I admired my new shoes as I enjoyed my drink. The Grand Canal shimmered in the May sunshine, and its light seemed to dance over my feet. ■

*The Book Of Memory* by Petina Gappah (Faber & Faber, £14.99)

For more stories about body image, go to [REDONLINE.CO.UK](http://REDONLINE.CO.UK)



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What you  
smell.

What your  
guests smell.



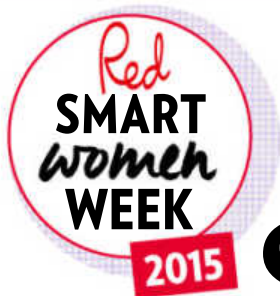
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# LIVE LIFE SMARTER

Red's Smart Women Week was packed with events and broadcasts by experts and guest speakers at the Pandora townhouse. Missed it? Here are a few of the best bits



## FAST, SMART BEAUTY

From hosting a beauty breakfast to a session of makeovers, Florrie White, Clinique's UK colour artist, gave us a wealth of tips.

- 1 Dab a little blush under brows for extra warmth.
- 2 Wash your brushes with Fairy Platinum to eliminate bacteria.
- 3 Use yellow liner inside the waterline to brighten the whites of your eyes.



House events included (from left) wellbeing with Gold Collagen; and mentoring with Pandora and Tess Daly



'I'm always inspired by the mums that I see on the school run. You know, the ones who just get on with it.' **Tess Daly, TV presenter and Pandora ambassador**

A highlight of the week was our Smarty, hosted with BT, at the top of London's BT Tower. Glorious views and a party packed with some of the smartest women we know. What could be better?

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Smarty guests (from left) Hearst CEO Anna Jones; and BBC Radio 4's Sima Kotecha



## Overheard in the Smart Women Week House



'A smart woman is one who feels free to take whatever decisions she wants with her life.' **Miriam González Duránte, lawyer**



'We're always told what we "can" or "can't" do. Knock those barriers down with your head held high.' **Kelly Hoppen, interior designer**



'A smart woman is a woman other women look at and feel empowered by.' **Eniola Aluko, footballer and sports lawyer**



'Don't be who you think someone wants you to be. Once you're comfortable with who you are, believe in it.' **Edith Bowman, DJ and author**



'One has to become one's own soulmate. The most important growth is learning to like yourself.' **Candace Bushnell, author**

Find more 'live smarter' tips at [REDONLINE.CO.UK/SmartWomenWeek](http://REDONLINE.CO.UK/SmartWomenWeek)

**#ThisIsASmartWoman**

# Women's Health

A woman with her hair in a ponytail, wearing yellow wristbands, sunglasses, a grey and black crop top, and patterned shorts, is stretching her arms behind her head. The background is a blurred cityscape.

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*featuring...*

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30 DETOX RECIPES

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THE 14-DAY PLAN  
FROM THE WORLD'S  
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THE SPORTS-LUXE TRENDS  
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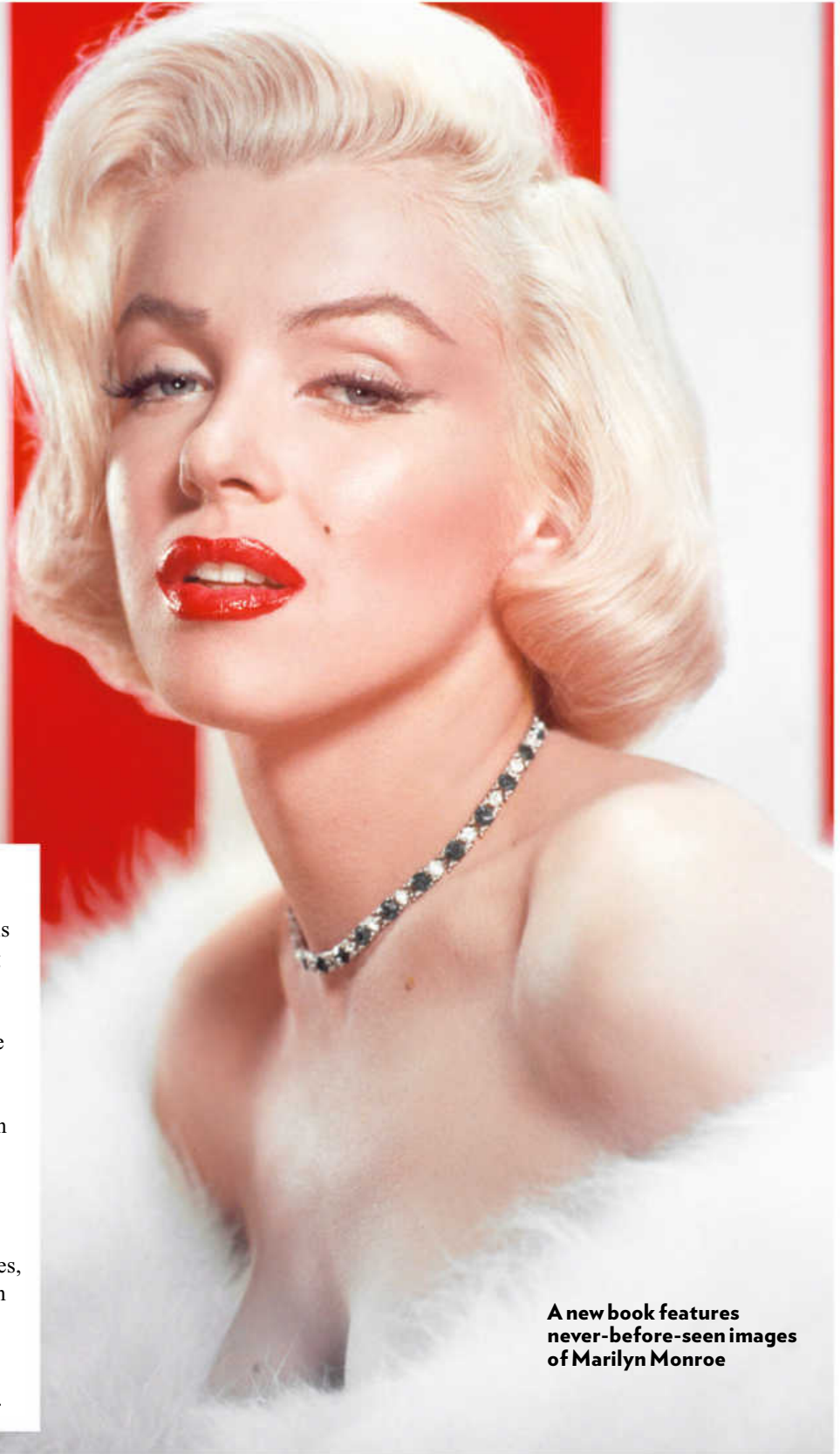
# Reads

Edited by HANNAHDUNN

## Girl on FILM

**W**hen Kanye West compared his selfie-loving wife Kim

Kardashian to Marilyn Monroe, he was met with derision. But the comparison is not so ridiculous. Marilyn courted the press, using personal relationships to heighten her profile, and was the most photographed woman of the era. *Marilyn: In The Flash* by David Wills (Harper Collins, £25) contains never-before-seen images, chronicling the media's obsession with the star. Sadly, we'll never know what her Instagram feed would have been like, but this portfolio is the next best thing. »



**A new book features never-before-seen images of Marilyn Monroe**

**SURVIVAL**

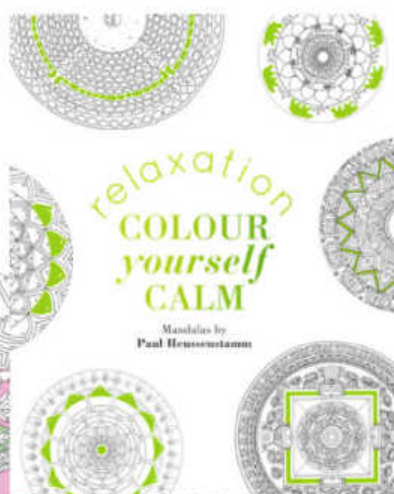
# Festive SAVIOURS

Christmas can be a little overwhelming, so let these books be your helping hand



## Escape

Even if you might not be able to hole up on your own, just opening up the pages of *Cabin Porn: Inspiration For Your Quiet Place Somewhere* by Zach Klein and friends (Particular Books, £20) can do the trick. Featuring more than 200 incredible cabins and their makers, the cult online scrapbook has finally made its way into a book, showcasing tiny handmade homes all over the world.



## Calm

Colouring in has been proven to ease tension and banish stress. So the next time it gets too much, pull out *Colour Yourself Calm: Relaxation* by Paul Heussentamm (Quadrille, £9.99), pencil in some comforting circles and soothe your mind.



## Eat

We can all get a little turkey fatigue, but thanks to Tara Stiles' *Make Your Own Rules Cookbook* (Hay House UK, £18.99), healthy eating is made easy. With over 100 recipes inspired by her friends and family, you can tuck into hearty Banana-almond butter pancakes for brunch, a Lazy pad thai for dinner, and finish off with Vera's Russian baked apples.



## Party

'Tis the season for parties, but thanks to *Kate Spade New York: All In Good Taste* (Abrams, £17.99) preparing is a little easier. Complete with a fail-safe guide to everything from setting the table to shucking an oyster and perfecting your dinner-table chat, it has everything covered.







# BEST OF The books that made 2015

The ones that made us laugh,  
cry and read until we fell asleep  
with the page stuck to our face

By SARRA MANNING

## **EARLY ONE MORNING BY VIRGINIA BAILY (VIRAGO, £12.99)**

A beautiful novel that weaves between wartime Rome and the 1970s. A young woman saves a Jewish boy from a Nazi round-up, a decision that echoes through the decades.

## **THE BIG LIE BY JULIE MAYHEW (HOT KEY, £7.99)**

A chilling coming-of-age novel. Jessica Keller is a dutiful daughter until she falls under the sway of Clementine.

## **ASKING FOR IT BY LOUISE O'NEILL (QUERCUS, £12.99)**

The book that I've foisted on every teenage girl of my acquaintance. A brutal, unflinching look at the culture of slut-shaming and trial by social media. It broke my heart.

## **A MANUAL FOR CLEANING WOMEN BY LUCIA BERLIN (PICADOR, £16.99)**

A selection of short stories from the late Lucia Berlin that reel you in with their warmth, humour and a cast of ordinary women leading very real, very messy lives.

## **THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN BY PAULA HAWKINS (DOUBLEDAY, £12.99)**

This year's *Gone Girl*. An unreliable, unlikeable narrator (my favourite kind), something suspicious seen from a train window and a twist-laden plot that kept me guessing.

## **THE LAST ACT OF LOVE BY CATHY RENTZENBRINK (PICADOR, £14.99)**

The non-fiction book of the year. Rentzenbrink's memoir of her adored elder brother, Matty, and her family's battle to love him but let him go eight years after a car accident renders him helpless.

## **A GOD IN RUINS BY KATE ATKINSON (DOUBLEDAY, £20)**

A companion novel to *Life After Life*. The story of Teddy, WW2 bomber pilot, husband, father and gentle soul in a chaotic world, wrapped my heart up in its pages. Devastating.

## **THE PINK SUIT BY NICOLE MARY KELBY (VIRAGO, £7.99)**

The fictional story of Jackie Kennedy's iconic pink suit, and Kate, the Irish seamstress. Politics, fashion and intrigue. »





# My life in books: SARAH SOLEMANI

With her new film *Hector* out this month, the actress shares the books that made her laugh and got her through tough times

**THE LAST BOOK I READ WAS** *Mighty Be Our Powers* by Leymah Gbowee (Beast, £9.99). She's a Liberian peace activist and it's an awe-inspiring story of her journey to live in peace when they existed, quite simply, in hell.

**ONE BOOK EVERYONE SHOULD READ IS** *Girl Trouble* by Carol Dyhouse (Zed, £8.99). This book is evidence that in every period of history, from flapper girls to dolly birds, society would point the finger, shake their heads and tut, 'What kind of world do we live in when women behave like that?'

**THE BOOK THAT GOT ME THROUGH MY TEEN YEARS WAS** *Madhur Jaffrey's Indian Cookery* (BBC, £25). My mum died when I was 16 and my dad couldn't cook, so I had to learn. My dad was born in India and so we are all genetically predisposed to eat curry regularly. It got me through a bleak time.

**MY FAVOURITE BOOK ON SCREEN IS** *Ridley Road* by Jo Bloom (W&N, £7.99). I discovered this book, about the Jewish resistance to fascism in 1962, after

reading a review in *Red* and got in touch with the author about the rights. We took it to the BBC and we're going to make it next year.

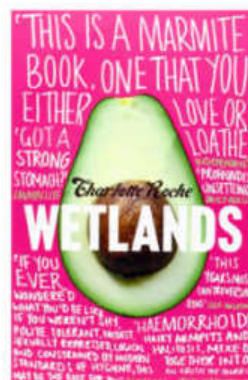
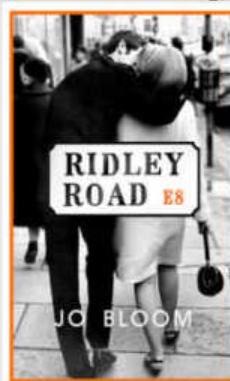
**MY FAVOURITE CHILDHOOD BOOK WAS** *Grimble At Christmas* by Clement Freud (at Amazon). I met a Freud at a showbiz party and said, 'I know you come from a legendary dynasty but the Freud contribution that impacted my life the most was *Grimble*.' It's comical and sweet and mainly about food, which I have loved from a young age.

**THE BOOK THAT MADE ME LAUGH IS** *Wetlands* by Charlotte Roche (HarperCollins, £8.99). You need a strong stomach but I think every woman should have a copy, as it's a real challenge to our cultural concepts of female sanitation.

**THE BOOK I WISH I'D WRITTEN IS** *How To Be A Woman* by Caitlin Moran (Ebury, £8.99). Funny autobiographical feminism made Moran a millionaire. *Hector* is in cinemas on December 11th. Sarah Solemani also stars in *The Five*, on Sky 1 in the new year

'You need a **STRONG** stomach but every woman should have a **COPY**'

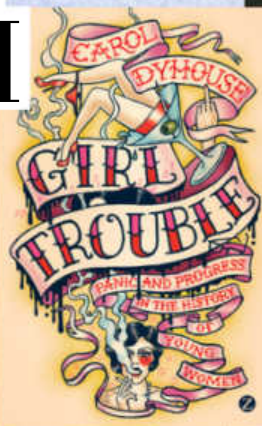
Cooking curries from Madhur Jaffrey's *Indian Cookery* got Solemani through a bleak time



Solemani wishes she'd written Caitlin Moran's *How To Be A Woman*



Solemani says *Girl Trouble's* spotlight on society's view of women is eye-opening



Interview Hannah Dunn. Photographs: Getty Images, Full Stop Photography





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# Low-key LUXE

Go large in this season's effortless must-haves – sleek jeans, a billowy blouse and statement shoes

Lace insert  
necklace  
blouse, £16.  
Wonder-fit  
jeans, £20.  
Brogues, £14

## FIND YOUR FASHION INSPO

Get into the festive spirit and plan your party season wardrobe with help from [fashionunexpected.co.uk](http://fashionunexpected.co.uk). You'll find hints and tips to keep you looking stylish no matter what the occasion.

George

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#FASHION **UNEXPECTED**



# HOW TO BUILD A BUSINESS... *FROM SCRATCH*

If you've ever dreamt of setting up your own business, don't miss the chance to meet the entrepreneurs behind three successful start-ups at this *Red* Network event

**H**ave you ever considered starting your own company, but been put off because it's something 'other' people do? Join three of *Red*'s favourite entrepreneurs (including the winner of our *Red* Women of the Year Award, in association with Clinique, Start-Up category, Emma Cerrone), who have all grown highly impressive – but very different – businesses from scratch, for a panel discussion about their successful start-up secrets. With a focus on the practical tips you need to start your own venture, they'll share their experiences and expertise – from using social media to build your brand to self-financing and how to fake it until you make it. Let their business journeys motivate and inspire you.

## THE DIGITAL ENTREPRENEUR


As the winner of the Start-Up category in 2015's *Red* Women of the Year Awards, in association with Clinique, Emma Cerrone is an inspirational business leader. She's the CEO of **FREEFORMERS**, a digital training company that she co-founded in 2012. The business trains teams from major companies like Sky, the BBC and Barclays, transforming their digital prowess. And for every paying customer, Freeformers then trains a 16- to 25-year-old, for free. Just three years ago, Emma and her team used a local café as their 'office'. Not any more.



## THE HEALTHY FOOD PIONEER

As the woman behind **HONESTLY HEALTHY**, Natasha Corrett is one of the most influential foodies in the UK. Victoria Beckham agrees – she's a fan of Natasha's alkaline-based approach to eating. With her bestselling books, website and social-media presence (305k followers on Instagram, and counting), Natasha has grown her business from a home-delivery service to a healthy-eating powerhouse. Not bad when you consider that five years ago, *Honesty Healthy* didn't exist, and Natasha was running yoga and meditation retreats.

## THE FITNESS GURU

The fitness industry is a crowded one, but Joan Murphy and her business partner Pip Black created something bold and new when they launched **FRAME** fitness studios in 2009. Where else can you go to learn Beyoncé's dance moves, or old-school Eighties aerobics? *Frame*, shortlisted in our 2015 *Red* Women of the Year Awards Start-Up category, now has two London sites, with more in the pipeline, and recently teamed up with Whistles to produce a sportswear range. 

Join us at  
**Red Network**

**WHEN:** January 19th,  
6.30pm: Drinks 7.30-8.30pm:

Talk and Q&A **VENUE:**  
1 Wimpole St, London W1G 0LZ

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\*Offer only available at [www.trollbeads.com](http://www.trollbeads.com). Expires 31st December 2015. Join us and start your story today.



# Fashion

Edited by NICOLA ROSE

**Coated cotton sleeveless jacket**, around £680, Emilio Pucci. **Silk and polyester bra**, £99, Fleur of England. **Lurex skirt**, £915, Gucci. **Suede shoes**, £450, Giuseppe Zanotti

## THE END OF THE YEAR SHOW

Oh, hello 2016. We're just getting ready in our hottest MIDI HEMS – the PRINTS, the pleats, the SILKY fabrics – a suede heel, a dash of BRIGHTS, et voilà, time to celebrate. As our ethereally beautiful cover star Michelle DOCKERY begins life anew without *that* drama, she shows us exactly how it's done...

Photograph Max Abadian. For stockist details, see the Directory

**Flattering pleats  
look special in colour  
block and clashing  
prints, giving your  
skirt something to  
really shout about**

**Cotton top, £192;  
silk skirt, £238, both  
MSGM. Cashmere  
cardigan, £2,335; metal  
and resin bracelet,  
£1,005; patent leather  
shoes, £499, all Chanel.  
Suede bag, £615, Tod's**





**Use black as a base to brights this spring/summer to make your colours pop**

**Viscose wool top**, £495; **wool and polyester skirt**, £2,130; **leather shoes** (just seen), £615, all Bottega Veneta. **Wool felt hat**, £90, Polo Ralph Lauren. **18ct gold earrings**, price on request, Barbara Casasola. **18ct gold-plated sterling silver bracelet**, £150; **18ct gold-plated sterling silver ring** (just seen), £135, both Sophie Wallgren

# GREAT LENGTHS

THE SKIRT IS THIS SEASON'S HERO PIECE ALL THE WAY THROUGH TO SPRING. MAXI, MIDI AND EVERYTHING IN-BETWEEN, ADD A SPLASH OF BRIGHTS AND LEAP INTO THE YEAR AHEAD

*Photographs* PAUL BELLAART  
*Styling* LAURENT FRANKS

An A-line in an unexpected fabric feels uber-modern. Wear breezily with your tonal wardrobe basics

**Leather jacket**, £1,021; **wool top**, £344; **net skirt**, £498, all Dorothee Schumacher. **Earrings**, as before. **Leather belt**, £630; **suede bag**, £1,380, Hermès. **Leather shoes**, £775, Jimmy Choo







**Embrace a playful splash of yellow to brighten dark days and keep your wardrobe fresh**

**Poly crêpe shirt, £640; crêpe de Chine skirt, £1,290, both Altuzarra. 18ct gold-plated sterling silver earrings, £125; 18ct gold-plated sterling silver ring, £125, both Sophie Wallgren. Linen and leather bag, £550, Loewe. Suede shoes, £450, Giuseppe Zanotti**



**The shin-hitting  
midi is the season's  
new length. Time  
to drop your hem  
lines, ladies**

**Cotton top**, £530;  
**suede skirt**, £2,610,  
both Marni. **Ring**,  
Sophie Wallgren, as  
before. **Leather bag**,  
£125, Tommy Hilfiger.  
**Leather-mix shoes**,  
£695, Jimmy Choo



**A contemporary take on the hit Sixties style, the leather skirt to choose is knee-length or longer**

**Acetate-mix top, £395; leather skirt, £1,950, both Bally. Earrings, as before. Leather shoes, £400, Armani**



**Floaty florals don't have to be girly. Choose a black background and you've got the perfect winter remedy**

**Viscose-mix top,** £635; **silk skirt,** £525, both JW Anderson.

**Sterling silver earrings,** £115;

**ring,** as before, both Sophie Wallgren.

**Leather shoes,** Armani, as before







**Dig out your pencil skirt, and give it a fresh update with a sporty vest or tee. Throw on a chunky knit jumper (one size too big) if the air still has a bite**

**Cotton vest**, £195; **silk skirt**, £245, both MaxMara. **Viscose jumper**, £360, Sportmax. **Earrings; bracelet**, both Sophie Wallgren, as before. **18ct gold-plated necklace**, £70, Harry Rock. **Leather bag**, £730, MaxMara. **Suede shoes**, £495, Casadei

Model Ragnhild Jevne at IMG Models London. Hair Liam James Moore at S Management, using Kiehl's and Label M. Make-up Terry Barber at David Artists, using MAC. Nails Kim Treacy at LMC Worldwide, using Chanel S 2016 and Body Excellence Hand Cream. Stylist's assistant Chloe Forde. Location Spring Studios

# AND FOR MICHELLE'S NEXT ACT...

AS CARSON  
CLOSES THE  
DOWNTON  
FRONT DOOR  
FOR THE LAST  
TIME, MICHELLE  
DOCKERY TALKS  
TO ROSAMUND  
DEAN ABOUT  
GOOGLING  
HERSELF, GOING  
BACKPACKING  
AND LEAVING  
LADY MARY  
BEHIND

*Photographs* MAX ABADIAN  
*Styling* NICOLA ROSE







OPPOSITE:  
**Lurex top**, £780; **wool trousers**, £950, both Dior. **Silver-plated gold and topaz earrings**, £275, Smith/Grey. **9ct rose gold bracelet**, £3,590, Robinson Pelham. **Leather shoes**, £475, Jimmy Choo

THIS PAGE:  
**Cotton and sequin jumper**, £460, Christopher Kane at Liberty. **18ct gold earrings**, £1,295, Vanrycke at Monnier Frères »

**'I WAS SO  
OVERWHELMED,  
I FOUND IT HARD TO  
ADJUST TO BEING  
RECOGNISED'**



new year marks new beginnings (well, we like to think so, with our hopes and

resolutions). But for Michelle Dockery, 2016 marks the start of a big new chapter: a life without *Downton Abbey*.

Since being scooped up by ITV's thundering juggernaut aged 27, and launched into the lives of an estimated 120 million viewers in 220 countries, Dockery's face is instantly recognisable in every corner of the globe as Lady Mary Crawley.

'On my last day of filming, leading up to that final take, I felt sick,' she tells me. We're in a north London studio for *Red*'s cover shoot, surrounded by lights and glitter and mirror balls. 'I didn't expect to feel as sad as I did.'

I have to say, right now she looks like the happiest girl in the world; twirling delightedly in her tasselled Armani jumpsuit and gossiping about *Downton*'s wrap party at The Club at The Ivy ('The producer did a speech and said, "Now let's party like it's 1925!"' My feet have only just recovered from all the dancing.').

Breaking for lunch, she flops on the sofa in a towelling robe. There's a touch of last-day-of-school about her, that dizzy anticipation of being on the cusp of a new phase.

'Leaving the show did feel like we were graduating,' she admits. And, like all graduates, she's made friends for life in her co-stars. She tells me about being on a plane to LA with Laura Carmichael (Lady Edith) and watching *Cinderella*, starring Lily James (cousin Rose). 'We felt we had been part of it because Lily was on *Downton* when she got the job. I cried so hard, throughout the whole film.' She adds with a laugh, 'It might have been the altitude. And the champagne.'

It is to Dockery's credit that she talks about *Downton Abbey* with the enthusiasm of a fan, promising me this year's Christmas special is 'a number' and, although she thinks it's 'a smart move' to end where they did, she won't rule out a film spin-off.

But, for now, Dockery is looking to the future. She turns 34 this month, and is engaged to PR director John Dineen. But that's as much as we know, because she won't talk about him. It's a coping strategy she devised early on.

'When *Downton* first became...' she searches for the right word. 'Just the enormity of it. I was so overwhelmed and found it hard to adjust to being recognised and having my private life in the spotlight. You quickly realise that the press can get to you.'

She isn't rude or difficult about it (she's insanely friendly to everyone, perhaps in order to head off preconceptions that she's imperious like Lady Mary); just matter-of-factly private. Personally, I admire her for sticking to her guns. Professionally, of course, I'd

love her to have a meltdown and spill her darkest secrets because that would make great copy. But there is zero chance of that. I don't even think she has dark secrets. When I ask about her worst habits, she admits to having the occasional cigarette, before worrying that she shouldn't say that and wanting to change her answer to 'biting my nails' (sorry, Michelle!). Perhaps, once *Downton* mania has calmed down and she has settled into married life and a level of fame that is less hysterical, we'll see another side of this composed star.

In her work, however, we'll soon be seeing a couple of different sides to her. First up, she's in a film of Julian Barnes' novella *The Sense Of An Ending*, with Jim Broadbent. 'It was a dream come true working with Jim,' she says. 'And my character, Susie, is much closer to me than Mary, so it was nice to play a role that is like myself.'

Then – perhaps most excitingly – she's in a pilot for US channel TNT called *Good Behavior*, about to start filming in North Carolina. She stars as Letty Dobesh, a woman she describes as 'battling her demons and trying to escape her past'. If Dockery's trying to escape the spectre of Lady Mary, she's chosen quite the way to do it. Letty is a con artist who has been in and out of prison her whole life. 'The script just exploded off the page,' she grins. 'What I love about Letty is she's so open and raw. *Downton* is very restricted, because of the period and the fact that Mary's an aristocrat. Whereas Letty just doesn't care. It's liberating!'

It's a wonderfully strong female lead. Does it feel, with recent films like *Suffragette* and *Carol*, that there's a welcome increase in challenging film roles for women?

'I think so,' she nods. '*Bridesmaids* was a huge turning point because it showed women can be funny and outrageous and sexy and complicated all at the same time. I have so much respect for Kristen Wiig for pulling that off.'

Post-*Downton*, the world is Dockery's oyster. She has the profile and financial security to be able to pick and choose her roles, which must feel pretty empowering ('Yeah, there is a sense of that', she admits).

She's already worked with one of her icons, Julianne Moore, in *Non-Stop* (2014). 'I was so nervous, but she was really funny and wanted all the *Downton* gossip,' she laughs. 'It was reassuring because I've worked with very serious actors and I've thought, maybe I should be more serious. But then working with Julianne, who doesn't take it or herself seriously at all, made me think, I can relax.'

### IT'S REFRESHING TO MEET AN ACTRESS WHO DOESN'T TAKE HERSELF TOO SERIOUSLY, and

Dockery is so confident and brilliantly sweary. When I express concern that we've been chatting too long and she might be needed on set, she says, 'Oh, don't worry. Fuck 'em!' Then she does a tremendous dirty cackle and throws her slipper-clad feet up on the sofa.

But she hasn't always been so self-assured. She admits to googling herself, particularly in the early days. 'When »



**‘ON MY LAST  
DAY OF FILMING,  
LEADING UP TO  
THAT FINAL TAKE,  
I FELT SICK’**

**Sequin, satin and  
organza dress, £725,**  
Paule Ka. **Brass and  
glass pearl ring, £55,**  
Hélène Zubeldia at  
Monnier Frères.  
**Leather shoes, £440,**  
Sophia Webster





**Lace and feather  
dress, £2,495, Burberry.**  
**Earrings, as before.**  
**Leather shoes, £605,  
Gianvito Rossi »**

**‘I THINK MOST  
WOMEN CARE LESS  
WHAT PEOPLE  
THINK OF THEM AS  
THEY GET OLDER’**







people write about you, of course, you're curious to know what they're saying,' she says. 'It's dangerous to keep doing it because you will find things that will upset you. It's a slippery slope. You see it a lot: people googling themselves and going crazy. I still do it occasionally. Like my mum came with me to a BAFTA event and, immediately afterwards, I was on my phone because I couldn't wait to see a picture of my mum on the red carpet. But it's different now because I don't care as much. I think most women care less what people think of them as they get older.'

When I ask who she turns to for honest, critical advice, she answers immediately. 'My mum, and Vic my publicist...' and then a pause (as if deciding whether or not to mention him) before adding, 'and my partner, John. I've got people around me who I can turn to for advice but, at this stage, my instincts are pretty good.'

One element of Dockery's work, which means a lot to her, is her role as a humanitarian ambassador for Oxfam. She's worked with the charity for two years. 'I visited a Syrian refugee camp in Jordan and it's a desperate situation,' she says. 'It was devastating that it took seeing those images of the little boy (three-year-old Aylan Kurdi, on a Turkish beach) for people to wake up to what's going on.'

It's easy to be cynical about celebrities doing charity work, but Dockery's commitment is authentic and she seems determined to use her profile for good. 'I often think about the families I met and where they are now,' she says. 'It's so important to keep the message up about Syria and, especially in the winter, that money is raised to supply blankets and warm clothes to refugees.'

Many actresses who rose to prominence in a long-running TV series will forever be associated with their character. To lots of people, Christina Hendricks will always be *Mad Men's* Joan, and Anna Friel will always be *Brookside's* Beth Jordache. That kind of role is a blessing and a curse, but it's what you do afterwards that counts.

Gillian Anderson recently said that she regrets moving to London, when *The X-Files* ended, to be with her then boyfriend. 'I wish I'd been more aware when I was that age of how lucky I was, how many choices I had,' she said. 'I would have looked at all the different potential paths open to me and expanded my world more.'

Dockery is planning to expand her own world, and wants to make time for a proper break because, 'I never had a year out. Now I want to go travelling.' Where would she go? 'I've never been to Australia. I'd love to go to India. There are so many places in Europe I'd like to see. I want to go backpacking. Or interrailing.'

Hmm... sounds like quite a trip and, frankly, her schedule is pretty hectic already. I wonder if it will ever happen because, when she's not working, Dockery is a real homebody. She talks about her sisters and her parents often. 'Happiness is being with my closest family and friends,' she says. 'This Christmas I'll be in London with my family.' And she visibly melts

when I ask about the miniature schnauzer I've spotted on her Instagram. 'My mum's dog Archie! He's basically the son in our family. He is the most joyous little thing, and he's really photogenic.'

She loves Instagram, after initially being sceptical about it. 'I follow Juliette Lewis, who's awesome, and Earl Boykins and FuckJerry really make me laugh.' Her other Instaddiction is one that we can all relate to: dreamy interiors. 'This just makes me really happy,' she says, showing me a picture on her phone of a neat, white home by Australian interiors brand Immy+Indi. 'Love it,' she practically drools, scrolling through the pictures. 'Ooh, it makes me feel all calm. My apartment is a lot like that, quite Scandinavian.'

The home that she shares with Dineen is 'quite modern, but a blank canvas. I'm enjoying decorating it'. I get the feeling that 'enjoying' might be an understatement. She's obsessed with *Homes Under The Hammer* and *Grand Designs* ('and *Grand Designs Revisited*, because I remember them from the first time around') and tells me her favourite shop is HomeSense, near her parents' house in Romford. 'It's basically like the homes section of TK Maxx. I recently bought one of those natural coffee tables, like a tree stump. £40! It would be at least £200 in London. I go home to my mum and dad's for all the bargains.'

## **A LOT HAS CHANGED OVER THE SIX YEARS OF DOWNTON ABBEY**

and, in some ways, nothing has changed. Michelle Dockery has grown up and grown in confidence, but still likes going home to Romford.

I think about how she used to worry what people think of her. Is she still a worrier? 'Nah,' she laughs, 'hahaha!'

And, with that, she is called back to the cover shoot. I've seen many actresses complain about being tired towards the end of a long day, but the Dockery glow remains undimmed. In fact, it's at full beam, as she smiles and smoulders and twirls and pouts for the camera.

Eventually it's a wrap, and she emerges from the dressing room back in her own clothes: a Whistles skirt and a top by Rose & Willard.

We discuss New Year party plans. 'I never normally plan anything for New Year's Eve,' she muses, 'I think it's nice to get away, out of London, out of the country.' Wherever she is, I like to think she'll be kicking up her heels just as she does in this year's wonderful *Billy Elliot*-inspired Burberry festive campaign.

As for tonight, she's in two minds about whether to go straight home or for a drink with Laura Carmichael, who lives close by. Again, I get that giddy anything-can-happen buzz from every pore of her luminous face. For Michelle Dockery, the future is bright, and this girl knows it. ■

*The Downton Abbey Christmas Special is on ITV on Christmas Day. To donate to Oxfam's Christmas appeal for Syrian refugees, visit [oxfam.org.uk/refugeecrisis](http://oxfam.org.uk/refugeecrisis)*

Hair Leigh Keates at Premier Hair and Makeup, using Batiste Stylist Range. Make-up Mary Greenwell at Premier Hair and Makeup, using Chanel S 2016 and Sublimage. Nails Emma Welsh at August Management, using Leighton Denny. Stylist's assistant Chloe Forde. Set design Laura Timmons. Props assistant Rachel Mathewson. Location Spring Studios. Additional photographs Getty Images. The Picture Desk. For stockist details, see the Directory





**Polyamide and cotton dress, £971, Rochas. Resin earrings, £290, Marni**

**Dockery and her mother at the BAFTA Awards, 2015; below, as Lady Mary in *Downton Abbey* with actor Matthew Goode**



**BELOW, FROM LEFT: With fiancé John Dineen; with fellow *Downton* star, Laura Carmichael; and in *Non-Stop***



**For Michelle Dockery's Best Things in Life, visit [REDONLINE.CO.UK](http://REDONLINE.CO.UK)**





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— Julianne Moore

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# Beauty

Edited by ROSIE GREEN



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## Red's BEST OF BEAUTY 2015

From yoga-glow-giving serums to standout scents, this is the definitive list of products, innovations and trends that changed our lives, and looks, last year

## BEST FOR BODY

Great smelling, spirit lifting,  
skin beautifying, worth buying

**Bamford** Botanic  
Nurture Balm, £22  
*The nourishing,  
buttery texture  
gives limbs a luxe,  
glossy sheen.*

**Rituals** Happy  
Buddha Foaming  
Shower Gel, £8.50  
*Its invigorating  
citrus scent makes  
every shower  
brighter.*

**BEST FOR DIY  
SPA-ING**  
**L'Occitane**  
Rebalancing  
Infusions for Bath,  
£15 for five  
*Pop one of these  
scented sachets  
into a warm bath  
for a skin-  
softening soak.*

**COUNTER** our 24/7  
culture with these  
**DE-STRESSING**  
products – our go-to  
bath-side essentials

**Elizabeth Arden** Eight  
Hour Cream All-Over  
Miracle Oil, £29  
*A fast way of hydrating  
from top to toe.*

**Aromatherapy Associates**  
Liberty Exclusive Clear Mind  
Bath and Shower Oil, £48  
*Incredible stress buster in  
to-die-for outer packaging.*

**L'Occitane**  
Rebalancing  
Exfoliating  
Shower Gel, £14  
*Uplifting,  
refreshing, skin  
softening.*

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**Clarins** Radiance  
Plus Body Golden  
Glow Booster, £26  
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mixed with your  
favourite body lotion  
transforms it into a  
subtle gradual tanner.*

**Jo Malone**  
Geranium &  
Walnut Body  
Scrub, £40  
*A satisfyingly thick  
and grainy body  
potion – the  
impressive pot  
looks lovely by the  
bath, too.*

**MOA** Fortifying Green  
Bath Potion, £27.50  
*Packed with soothing mint,  
fennel and birch essential  
oils, this is our new favourite  
sore-muscle remedy.*





## BEST OF HAIR

### FINE, THIN HAIR:

**Sachajuan** Ocean Mist Volume Shampoo & Conditioner, £20 each  
Gave our flat hair extra volume and fullness, minus any residue.



### DRY, DAMAGED HAIR:

**Balance Me** Protect & Shine Shampoo & Conditioner, £10 each  
Impressed us with their brilliant softening powers.



### VOLUMISER:

**John Frieda** Luxurious Volume 7 Day In-Shower Treatment, £9.99  
Wash-in treatment that left our hair feeling thicker for days.



### HAIR TREATMENT:

**Kérastase** Résistance Masque Thérapiste, £28.50  
This pot turned even the most damaged hair into spun silk.



### DE-FRIZZER:

**L'Oréal Paris** Elvive Nutri-Gloss Luminiser Extraordinary Gloss, £9.99  
One or two drops worked into lengths leaves hair instantly smoother and glossier.



### STYLING PRODUCT:

**Bumble & Bumble** Don't Blow It (H) air Styler, £23  
Gives air-dried hair that 'off-duty model' texture. So good, it consistently sells out.

## TREND

### New-gen beauty vocab

**BRONDE.** An ultra-flattering hair colour that harnesses the attention-grabbing power of blonde and the complexion-enhancing capabilities of brunette. Think Olivia Palermo, Gisele and Blake Lively.  
**STROBE.** Move over contouring (creating shade), it's now all about prettifying/youth-giving highlighting.  
**FLAT AGEING.** That thing celebs do when they don't seem to get any older. That's you, Rachel Weisz.  
**SHELFIES.** Instagram pics that showcase an enviably chic arrangement of products on a bathroom shelf. Addictive.



Sienna Miller

## MOST REQUESTED

### THE LOB

Hairdressers report a tidal wave of customers brandishing pics of the long bobs of Sienna and January Jones. If you haven't considered it yet, do. It's a flattering cut that a) doesn't drag features down, b) cuts out frazzled split ends, c) makes hair look and feel thicker and d) is incredibly versatile (you can blow-dry it, use curling tongs or air-dry). 'It needs to be longer at the front and chopped into,' says George Northwood, the hairdresser behind Rosie HW's. Cut out and keep...

## THE GO-TO BASES



**Crème de la Mer**  
The Reparative Skin Tint SPF30, £65  
Passport to flawless skin.

**Givenchy**  
Teint Couture Baume, £29  
Glowy, holiday skin in a tube.

**Bare Minerals**  
Complexion Rescue, £26  
Moisturising formula with an extensive shade range.

**Bourjois**  
Nude Sensation Foundation, £12.99  
Pore blurrer + BB cream at a great price.

**Perricone MD**  
No Foundation Foundation Serum, £45  
Evens tone while nourishing skin.

**Dior**  
Diorskin Nude Air Fluid, £33  
Lightweight with serious skin-perfecting power. >>

# SKINCARE THAT DELIVERS

Truly transformative serums,  
oils, creams and balms

**ESPA** Optimal Skin Pro  
Moisturiser, £45

*A heavenly scented,  
brilliantly rejuvenating  
cream that delivers moisture  
wherever skin needs it most.*

**Origins** Three Part  
Harmony Oil-Infused  
Serum, £60

*Quenches parched  
skin and restores  
its youthful glow.*

**Darphin** 8-Flower  
Nectar Oil Cream, £65

*This beautiful,  
fragrant balm is  
seriously cosseting  
- think of it as SOS  
care for needy skin.*

**Clinique**  
Smart Custom-  
Repair Eye  
Treatment, £38  
*'Eight hours'  
sleep in a bottle.*

**Dr Hauschka**

Night Serum,  
£39 for 25ml  
*Impressive  
plumping  
powers that  
belie its  
lightness.*

**Nude** Detox  
Brightening  
Fizzy Powder  
Wash, £38  
*Reveals  
brighter,  
fresher-  
looking skin.*

**Kiehl's** Daily Reviving  
Concentrate, £36  
*An instant pick-me-up  
for both skin and senses.*

**Elizabeth Arden**  
Superstart Skin  
Renewal Booster,  
£45 for 30ml  
*Makes daily skincare  
work harder.*

**MOST  
SKIN-DULGENT  
CLEANSER**

**Elemis** Pro-  
Collagen Cleansing  
Balm, £55  
*Makes mornings  
(and your skin)  
a whole lot better.*

**Caudalie** Resveratrol  
Lift Night Infusion  
Cream, £39  
*Deeply nourishing  
and comforting.*

**Crème de la Mer**  
The Renewal Oil,  
£155 for 30ml  
*The ultimate  
skin treat.*

EVERY single  
PRODUCT on this  
page feels as GOOD  
as it LOOKS



## HEALTHY NAILS IN A BOTTLE...

Meet the new nail-polish equivalents of BB creams and highlighters. The soft, pinky tones give tips a Photoshopped finish, the vitamin-rich formulas nourish and the overall outcome is a healthy, clean sheen, lending a sophisticated nod to the bare-nails trend.

**Guerlain**  
Nailift La  
Base, £19

**OPI** Nail  
Strengtheners in  
Bubble Bath,  
£14.95

**Nails Inc** NailKale  
NailBright in  
Chelsea  
Embankment  
Mews, £14

## #EMPTIES

IN 2015, AN INSTAGRAM PICTURE OF A DEPLETED PRODUCT BECAME VISUAL SHORTHAND FOR 'IT'S BRILLIANT'. AND IF A BEAUTY EDITOR'S DOWN TO THE LAST DROP, YOU KNOW IT'S REALLY GOOD. HERE'S WHAT RED USED UP...



**Dolce & Gabbana**  
Velvet Mimosa  
Bloom, £155  
*An addictive and powdery day-to-night fragrance.*



**Sisley Paris**  
Super Soins Solaires  
Milky Body Mist  
SPF 30, £83  
*Limb-softening moisture + all-over protection.*



**Estée Lauder**  
New Dimension  
Shape + Fill  
Expert Serum, £62  
*Excellent for skin tightening and brightening.*



**Clarins** UV  
Plus Anti-Pollution  
SPF 50  
Day Screen, £32  
*Adds a pretty sheen and works under make-up.*



**Murad**  
AHA/BHA  
Exfoliating  
Cleanser, £34  
*A non-irritating, excellent exfoliator.*

## TREND

### 'Maskimising'

AKA 'multi-masking'. 2015's biggest (and most useful) skin trend, this was all about spot-treating the different zones of your face with different masks, eg applying a purifying clay mask to your T-zone and a plumping gel mask to your cheeks. Funny-looking? Perhaps. Sensible? Absolutely. And with a multitude of new masks due to hit shelves next year, trust us, it's a trend that's set to stay.

#### BEST PLUMPING:

**Decléor** Aurabsolu Hydrogel Mask, £12 for one sachet

#### BEST DETOXIFYING:

**Estée Lauder** Clear Difference Purifying Exfoliating Mask, £35

#### BEST BRIGHTENING:

**Origins** Original Skin Retexturizing Mask with Rose Clay, £23 >>

## 5 NEW CAN'T-LIVE-WITHOUT ESSENTIALS



**THE WIPES:**  
**Simple** Kind To Skin Micellar Cleansing Wipes, £3.99  
*Sweeps away even waterproof mascara, but still gentle on skin.*



**THE LIFE ENHANCER:**  
**This Works** Sleep + Pillow Spray, £35  
*Ultra-strength lavender mist that really does help you drift off.*



**THE RAZOR:**  
**Gillette** Venus Snap Women's Portable Razor, £9.99  
*Portable and packable, but still a proper razor. Genius.*



**THE SMART WORKER:**  
**Shiseido** Ibuki Multi Solution Gel, £30  
*Pat this unique gel-serum on to refresh skin or make-up in seconds.*



**THE GADGET:**  
**Philips** Sonicare DiamondClean Amethyst Toothbrush, £250  
*Pricey, but it's the fastest way to noticeably whiter teeth.*

Colour  
as **real** as  
you are.

We only make colour  
so real and natural  
looking, it doesn't look  
like hair colour at all.  
It just looks like you.  
No wonder it's  
the **UK's #1\***

**56 authentic shades**

**Up to 100% grey coverage**



nice'n  
easy

CLAIROL

Sarah's colour is #5 Natural Medium Brown.

©2015 P&G  
\*based on IRI volume sales August 2014 to August 2015



## MAKE-UP'S HALL OF FAME

The ultimate mascara, the wonder concealer, the best radiance booster ever. You're welcome

**Guerlain** Météorites Baby Glow Sheer Foundation SPF 25, £31.95  
Primes, plumps and subtly perfects skin without suffocating it.

**Chanel** Les Beiges Healthy Glow Sheer Colour Stick, £32  
Dot on to the centre of cheeks then blend for the most realistic flush.

**BEST GLOW GIVER**  
**Guerlain** Terracotta Joli Teint Powder, £35.50  
Delivers a realistic sun-kissed glow.

**Lancôme** Hypnôse Volume-à-Porter Mascara, £22.50  
Simply exceptional.

**Clinique** Pop Lip Colour and Primer, £16  
Innovative formula = smooth lips and a statement pout.

**Dior** Fix It 2-in-1 Prime & Conceal, £23.50  
We love this concealer-balm hybrid. It brightens and perfects without flaking or setting into fine lines.

**NO MIRROR NECESSARY**  
**Givenchy** Le Rouge A Porter, £25  
Creamy, easy-to-apply colours in a range of fresh, skin-flattering shades.

**Max Factor** Masterpiece High Precision Liquid Eye Liner in Black, £7.99  
For perfect cat-eye flicks every time.

UPDATE your make-up bag with these skin-perfecting, RADIANCE-BOOSTING, feature-enhancing SUPER products »



## WINNING PERFUMES

Sophisticated, sexy scents that stand out from the crowd

**Chloé** Love Story EDP, £65 for 50ml

*Our favourite feel-good spritz, this is packed with sunny orange blossom and fresh stephanotis jasmine.*

**Prada** Infusions Fleur D'Oranger EDP, £84 for 100ml

*Uplifting, sophisticated, delectable. We utterly fell for the Infusions Collection this year.*

**Miu Miu** EDP, £66 for 50ml


*Totally covetable floral.*

**Dior** J'Adore Touche de Parfum, £70 for 20ml  
*This elixir is divine.*

**Tom Ford** Fleur de Portofino EDP, £145 for 50ml

*This sparkling blend of white florals and citrus became our must-have summer spritz.*

**THE SUBTLY SEXY ONE**  
**Alaïa** Paris EDP, £85 for 100ml

*A soft, powdery and sensual blend of rose petals and skin-like musks. *

**THE OIL RUSH:** 2015 saw the slippery stuff take a STARRING ROLE in night creams, cleansers, tinted lip balms, even Dior's new J'Adore Touche de Parfum. Why? Oils are excellent at penetrating SKIN DEEPLY, delivering YOUTH-BOOSTING nourishment and on-trend LUMINOSITY

**WIN THEM ALL!**  
TO ENTER OUR COMPETITION FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN ALL 72 OF RED'S BEST OF BEAUTY 2015, GO TO [REDONLINE.CO.UK](http://REDONLINE.CO.UK)



“when looking to nail  
best dressed...  
**fringe factor.”**

*Essie*

My “luxeffects” were designed to  
dazzle! So brush on some brilliance  
and add a glamorous glimmer to  
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# DHC *Tokyo* UNCOMMON BEAUTY

## How do you take it off?

**Born in Japan. Loved by millions everywhere.**

Completely dissolves dirt and make-up (sayonara, panda eyes!).

Powered by olive oil for happy, healthy skin. Rinses clean. Skin is soft, never greasy.

Don't go one more day without it. **DHC Deep Cleansing Oil.**



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JARROLD NORWICH JOHN BELL & CROYDEN LONDON SELFRIDGES & CO. LONDON, BIRMINGHAM



# THE NEW FACE-LIFT LITE. WOULD YOU?

In a world that fetishises youth, having 'work' done remains taboo. But a treatment that promises to lift and smooth without the trauma of a traditional nip and tuck? Sharon Walker is tempted

Photograph JENNY LEWIS



Post 'face-lift lite', Sharon Walker's confidence has been bolstered 'no end'

I never thought I'd be the kind of woman to consider a face-lift. My ex-husband once told me he would always see me as I was the day we fell in love, so after that I didn't really worry about ageing. But 20 years after that sweet declaration, me and my face are out there on our own. And just at the moment I need it to step up, my face is deserting me. Or that's how it feels, anyway.

As a single woman in your fifties you need to grow a resilient Teflon coat. For every girlfriend who tells me I'm gorgeous, it seems there's a man to remind me that I'm fast approaching my sell-by date. One internet suitor (50 himself) regaled me with a story of how he'd blown up my picture to the size of a house to scrutinise my face for signs of slippage before agreeing to meet.

Most of the time I ignore these kind of comments, but then I'll be caught unawares by the sight of my chin in a mirror and it throws me. Wrinkles, laughter lines and eye bags I can live with, but jowls? Really? It's funny how we celebrate some signs of ageing: sleek curtains of silver hair are elegant, deeply etched lines can be characterful, but when we describe someone as jowly it's only ever an insult.

I've given up alcohol, eat omega-3 fatty acids like Smarties and sweat buckets at the gym – I could be on this

planet until I'm 90. Do I want to spend the next 40 years looking grumpy? As my friend Katy says, 'Sod that!'

So when *Red*'s beauty director suggests I take myself off to see three cosmetic surgeons, purely in the name of research, I'm a little put out, but not averse to the idea. When you're 30 or 40, or even 45, it's easy to say, 'I'll never do that.' But then your face starts to migrate south and you see Sharon Stone looking amazing or a glamorous grandmother in a magazine with a neat Audrey Hepburn jawline and you think, 'I'll have what she's having.'

Seconds later, though, doubts creep in, because outside the cliquey confines of the beauty industry, having 'work' is still judged and ridiculed mercilessly. Where

I stand on these things changes daily with the wind, but it does seem like a strange double standard when we fetishise youth and beauty to such an extent.

In my work as a beauty writer, I've had the chance to try all manner of non-surgical procedures and perhaps it was my success with treatments like Botox that has opened the door to me thinking about more invasive treatments. But the leap from non-surgical interventions to a full anaesthetic, flesh-slicing face-lift is massive. I can't just hop on the operating table and nip back to my life as if nothing has happened. And then there's the expense. The »

'When you're 30 or 40, or even 45, it's EASY to say, "I'll NEVER do that"'

surgeons I saw charged £8,000 to £10,000. That's one family car (and a lot of loan repayments) to gamble on a procedure that might or might not make me happy. What if I die on the operating table and leave my children motherless? And what if I wake up with that strange worked-on look, like that poor Wildenstein woman?

I don't know how you get to the point where you find a surgeon you can trust to do a full face-lift. It feels like an overwhelming decision and not one I'm ready to make. Which is perhaps why I shelve that idea and end up in the consulting office of Dr Geoffrey Mullan at Medicetics. Dr Mullan doesn't do face-lifts, but he is a trained facial surgeon, who taught anatomy at Guy's Hospital and practised in the NHS before co-founding his own anti-ageing clinic. He's a master at natural-looking fillers, and the one doctor I would trust to wield a needle (or in this case a cannula) into the deeper layers of my face. Dr Mullan and I have discussed my impending jowls before. He says there's not much he can do with injectables. In fact, he's even advised lightening up on the Botox as an over-smooth forehead accentuates a drooping lower face.

But there is one last non-surgical treatment that's sold as a solution to sagging, which I haven't tried yet. It's the thread lift, a kind of 'face-lift lite', which he has recently embraced. The treatment is usually recommended to younger women in their forties, but he is convinced I'll get a good result, and I'm impressed by the differences in his thread-lift clients, particularly one woman of 57, who looks a whole lot perkier after the treatment.

**THE TREATMENT DOESN'T SOUND ANYWHERE NEAR AS FRIGHTENING AS A FACE-LIFT**, but it's still a significant expense at £1,800. And then there are my kids to think of. I feel like a bit of a fraud doing this when I tell them to love themselves as they are and that beauty comes from within. I wonder, would they be horrified by my post-treatment appearance? I've been told to expect some bruising and swelling, but nothing like a face-lift.

Dr Mullan says he had given thread lifts a wide berth until this year, as the results reported had been variable and not especially long-lasting, sometimes as little as six weeks. But, like fillers, thread lifts have undergone an evolution of late, with stronger threads from Korea called PDO threads creating a buzz among cosmetic doctors.

PDO (Polydioxanone) is a material that is used widely in surgical suturing and breaks down slowly to be absorbed into the body. The threads, which are covered in fine, multi-directional barbs, are inserted in the fat layer below the skin, where they hook into the connective tissue, acting as a kind of pulley system fanning across the face. The threads break down over six months, triggering a scar tissue, which remains to hold the lift in place. I go for it.

'If someone needs a face-lift it's not going to replace that, but it can lift the jawline and mid-face,' Dr Mullan tells me, as he draws five lines in a fan across my cheek. He uses them as a guide to insert the first of five threads.

As he slides the cannula out, he gives a firm tug, lifting the skin and the fat pad of my cheek.

It's an odd feeling, like someone is sewing up my face, from the inside out. As the final thread goes in, there's a gruesome, disconcerting crunch as the cannula pushes through the connective tissue in my jowl and then a couple of shock-like pains. I try and remain calm.

With the first side finished, Dr Mullan gives me a mirror to examine his handiwork. The difference between the sides is remarkable. The marionette line

between my nose and mouth is softer and the cheek has noticeably lifted. As for the jowl, it's tightened considerably, but there is some 'skin rucking' in my mid-cheek, which looks like ripples in fabric. I'm not too panicked, as Dr Mullan had warned me this would happen and that it will disappear after a couple of weeks.

**A**fter 45 minutes it's done, and I'm given an ice pack to reduce the swelling and bruising. I'm also warned not to open my mouth wide (no dental appointments for a month), or I could unhook the threads (it takes effort to silence the alarm bells). Twenty minutes later I'm in the car on my way home. Neither of my children remark on the difference. That night I go out for dinner, but choose a dimly lit restaurant and take small mouthfuls. I sleep on my back as my face is tender; there's the occasional sharp pain, but nothing I can't stand without a paracetamol.

A week later, one side of my face is still slightly swollen and tender and it hurts when I move my mouth from side to side. It takes two full weeks for my face to settle down properly, for the swelling and dimpling to disappear, at which point I meet with a friend, who knows I'd been planning to do this. 'Oh my God, can we just talk about your face?' she says. For a moment my heart sinks – what does she mean, do I look weird? 'It's amazing, *amazing*. You look completely natural.' People who don't know I've done it tell me I look well. The lift should continue to improve for up to six months as new collagen grows between the barbs and the results should last for two years.

Ten weeks on I go for a girls' night with a group of friends I haven't seen in a while. 'Tell us how you still look 35?' one demands. It's typical girlie, supportive hyperbole. The truth is, I don't have the tight jawline I did at 35, but the difference *is* remarkable. It's bolstered my confidence no end. And I no longer look in the mirror and think: 'Bloodhound.'

*Thread lifts for the face, £1,800; for the neck, £1,500, at Medicetics; medicetics.com*

**For less invasive anti-ageing tips and tricks, head to [REDONLINE.CO.UK](http://REDONLINE.CO.UK)**



# Winter beauty SECRETS

The B. range – exclusive to Superdrug – promises to keep skin looking fresh and glowing this festive season

**A**s the winter months creep in, it's easy for our skin to become dehydrated thanks to a combination of cold weather, and festive parties. The solution?

According to blogger Carly Musleh, these B. Radiant eye creams, oils and serums are the skin saviours you need in your beauty cupboard this winter. B. offers top-quality products with high-end ingredients, at great value for money.

## 1 MIRACLE WORKER

'This moisturiser contains SPF 15 and protects against UVA rays while adding radiance,' says Musleh. Plus, it promises to reduce the appearance of lines and wrinkles within four weeks. Perfect for those blistery, cold days. **B. Radiant Day Cream, £11.99**



## 2 Skincare saviour

When it comes to rejuvenating skin overnight, Musleh swears by B. Radiant Facial Oil with 12-hour intense hydration and non pore-blocking formula. She says: 'I love to use this at night on top of my skincare for extra hydration.' **B. Radiant Facial Oil, £13.99**



## 3 SLEEPING BEAUTY

Musleh uses B. Radiant Serum to give her skin an intense boost every night. Why? 'It's a light and non-greasy serum that hydrates the skin.' Use this before your day or night cream, and you'll have glowing skin in no time. **B. Radiant Rejuvenating Serum, £13.99**



## 4 BRIGHT EYES

Musleh's festive beauty must-have? 'A lightweight eye cream that provides the moisture I need for the delicate eye area'. Not only will it brighten up tired-looking eyes, but it also helps reduce visible signs of ageing. **B. Radiant Eye Cream, £10.99**



## 5 Soothing solution

If you're looking for a youthful-looking complexion, this deeply nourishing moisturiser deserves space in your bathroom cabinet. According to Musleh, it 'nourishes and exfoliates, leaving you with brighter skin by morning.' **B. Radiant Night Cream, £10.99**



**All B. products are suitable for vegans and are cruelty free. Please visit [superdrug.com](http://superdrug.com) for more information.**



Exclusively at Superdrug



Blogger Carly Musleh picks her top skin saviours from B.

# *Framboise Noire*

= HEART OF DARKNESS =



SHAY & BLUE  
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TREND

# Pony CLUB

This season's coolest hairdo is effortlessly youthful and so easy to pull off. No blow-dry required. Here, five new ways to wear your pony

Words KIM PARKER

## ADD AN ACCESSORY

From the tiaras at Miu Miu to grosgrain ribbons at Oscar de la Renta, fashion's back in love with hair accessories. 'A ribbon can change a ponytail into something special,' says top stylist and Redken global creative director Guido Palau. 'It's the details that make a simple hairdo modern.'

Head of our list? Try Accessorize's Alice band (£19; right), or chic black grosgrain ribbon (£2.75; left), at VV Rouleaux, with a matte-textured pony. »

**STYLE ESSENTIAL:** Rahua Voluminous Dry Shampoo, £30; gives hair better grip



De la Renta S/S16



## Wrap it up

The easiest way to chic up a plain pony? Do as hairstylists did at the Temperley London show and, after securing your hair into a low ponytail (the messier, the better), take a 1cm section of hair from underneath and use to wrap around your elastic, securing underneath again with a bobby pin. Minimum effort, maximum style points.

**STYLE ESSENTIAL:** Sally Classic 5cm Hair Grips, £10.49 (left); loved by pros for their holding power

Bottega Veneta s/s16



## DITCH YOUR BRUSH

It's official: fingers are the new brushes. The ponytails at Kate Spade, Collina Strada and Marissa Webb were given a cool, roughed-up texture, making them the perfect foil for the pretty slip dresses we'll be wearing this spring. For that cool, backcombed look without going near a brush, spritz a fine-textured thickening spray upwards into the lengths of your hair (salt sprays can be too heavy and gritty), scrunch and ruffle with fingertips, then pull into a messy pony.



**STYLE ESSENTIAL:** Bumble & Bumble Dryspun Finish, £22; delivers masses of texture and volume, without build up

Kate Spade s/s16



## GET KNOTTY

When two of the world's sleekest luxury fashion brands (we're looking at you, Bottega Veneta and Balenciaga) embrace that most normcore of looks, the half-finished pony, you know it's officially a *thing*. Top stylist Guido Palau was the man responsible for the styles at both catwalk shows and says it couldn't be simpler: spritz a texturising spray like Redken's Wind Blown 05 (£12.20; right), through the lengths of your hair. Create a rough parting, then pull your hair through an elastic, leaving it in a low, half-finished loop. 'It literally takes minutes,' he says. Amen to that. ■



**STYLE ESSENTIAL:** Blax Snag-Free Hair Elastics, £7.54, from Amazon; they're super strong, but won't damage hair



Discover more of the latest hair trends at [REDONLINE.CO.UK](http://REDONLINE.CO.UK)

## TWISTED CHIC

Gym-inspired twisted ponies (seen everywhere from Altuzarra to Céline) take more effort, but the results are worth it. Pull hair into a tight pony below the centre of your head and secure with elastic. Divide it into two, twist each half, then twist them together and secure at the end. Tame any flyaways with grooming oil and fix with hairspray.

**STYLE ESSENTIAL:** Aveda Dry Remedy Daily Moisturizing Oil, £20.50; tames flyaways and imparts a glossy finish





# Beanie-Free Winters are Aussome

Take that, sub-zero temperatures.  
In your face, frizz.  
Get your mitts on  
Aussie's Winter Miracle range,  
with Australian Ginseng  
and Pearl Powder extract.  
For a beanie-beating barnet  
that shines like freshly fallen snow.

#FindYourAussome



There's more to life than hair but it's a good place to start





# Gillette® Venus® Embrace sensitive



Less feel of irritation\*

\*vs. Venus original 3 blade razor



Emma Willis, TV Presenter

“My perfect  
match for  
winter”



## SMOOTH YOUR WINTER SKIN

TOUCH OF ALOE™



\*\*For Glide



Embrace Sensitive Razor. Based on average  
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let's feel good

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Elie Saab SIS16

*Want hair like this?*  
**GET IT IN 3:**

# 1 TRY PUREOLOGY SMOOTH PERFECTION

As greys and thus colour increases, your hair condition deteriorates. This range (from £15.35) makes it soft and frizz-free.

# 2 COMB THROUGH YOUR CONDITIONER

Because stylist Vernon François, Lupita Nyong'o's mane man, says the way most people just smooth conditioner on to the surface of the hair renders it a lot less effective.

# 3 ADD 'VIRGIN HAIR' LUSTRE WITH A PRO BLOW-DRY CRÈME.

Kérastase Couture Styling Crème de la Crème (£19.50, top left) is your silky, shiny 16-year-old hair in a tube.



## Instant feel-good fix

Rejoice! Molton Brown's iconic hand wash scent, Orange & Bergamot, has now been bottled in Eau de Toilette form (from £39, far left), alongside seven other Molton Brown body-product fragrances. In a similar vein, Liz Earle has transposed the aroma of her Cleanse & Polish to a Eucalyptus & Rosemary Botanical Candle (£40, left).



UPDATE

# BEAUTY NOTEBOOK

## SPA IN A JAR?

Wantable. That sums up the new Bamford skincare line. Chic packaging contains plant actives that combine with aromatherapy oils to deliver both a cortisol-lowering 'ahhhh' and visible skin revitalisation. Our favourites? The glow-getting Restore Elixir (£75) and luxe Cleansing Balm (£55; both above).



## SMILE!

Previously only available Stateside, Crest 3D Whitestrips (on-the-go teeth-whitener stickers) are now coming here.

The percentage of the active ingredient, hydrogen peroxide, is reduced to 6% (from up to 14%), but still packs enough punch to significantly brighten.

£52, from participating dentists; [ukcrestwhitestrips.co.uk](http://ukcrestwhitestrips.co.uk)



## BEAUTY INSIDER

by ROSIE GREEN

Recently my cousin remarked that my **HANDS LOOKED LIKE OUR**

**GRANDMOTHER'S**. A glance down revealed they were indeed bony and reddened. To rectify the situation **I VISIT DERMATOLOGIST DR STEFANIE WILLIAMS**, medical director at European Dermatology London ([eudelo.com](http://eudelo.com)). She tells me diligent care plays an important role in rehabbing hands and regular application of hand cream makes a '**BIG DIFFERENCE**'. Get one with an antioxidant and SPF protection for day (try Neutrogena Norwegian Formula Anti-Ageing Hand Cream SPF25, £4.19) and retinol for night (ZO Skin Health Oraser Overnight Hand Recovery, £41). To **SUPERCARGE** your products, layer cotton gloves (£2.59 from Boots) over them while you sleep and commit to a weekly scrubbing with salt and olive oil. **IF DRASTIC ACTION IS REQUIRED** to regain elusive volume, she recommends her Skin Booster treatment (from £449), using injectable hyaluronic acid. After a brief internal debate I have 20 injections in each hand. The youth-boosting effect is remarkable – and the effects will last at least a year. I'm yet to show my cousin... 📌

## This month I have been...

**REBOOTING** with Omorovicza Hydra Melting Cleanser (£65, right); **REJOICING** in the spa industry's The Power Of Touch initiative to ensure therapists can treat cancer patients confidently; **HUGGING** my super-long hot-water bottle, the cashmere-soft Yuyu (£69)

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# Living

Edited by PIP McCORMAC

## RAISE A GLASS

'Tis the season to be jolly, and that tends to mean drink after drink. If you're hosting, think about what you'd like to be served – a tangy, non-sweetened cocktail to keep you refreshed without the sugar slumps,

or a non-alcoholic cooler with plenty of zing? Follow Richard Godwin's advice on page 142 and perfect one easy mix, or make big jugs of these Tart London recipes over the page. Cheers from all at Red. 🍷

# EAT, DRINK & *be wonderful*

A little bit of party planning goes a very long way, and with caterer Tart London's fresh flavours, big helpings and do-ahead dressings, you're guaranteed to enjoy your own bash as much as your guests

Photographs JONATHAN GREGSON Styling TABITHA HAWKINS Food styling SUNIL VIJAYAKAR

**J**emima Jones and Lucy Carr-Ellison are model party hosts. Literally. It's their job, as Tart London, to cater for fashion shoots and events attended by people like Kate Moss and photographers Mert and Marcus. They refuse to be specific when asked what the Supers want, but Jones admits, 'There are often divas with complicated demands, so the aim is to make it all light and nutritious so anyone can eat it.' Following a successful pop-up café in Queen's Park, north-west London, they've made their name with Asian flavours: crunchy veg and tangy dressings that are all too rare at this time of year. 'The trick to feeding large numbers,' says Carr-Ellison, 'is to plan ahead. Whether it's overnight marinades or sauces made in advance, choose recipes you can do before the night.' Jones' prep tactic? 'Put on music, have a glass of wine, keep calm.' Festively reassuring.

PIP McCORMAC  
tart-london.com

## CRISPY LEMONGRASS CHICKEN WITH GLASS NOODLES, MINT AND CHILLI

Bowl food always goes down well at parties – guests appreciate the extra sustenance. With its crunchy salad, this is an antidote to the more traditionally stodgy food of the season.

**SERVES:** 8

**PREPARATION TIME:**

*25 minutes, plus marinating time*

**COOKING TIME:** 10–20 minutes

**For the chicken:**

- 10 boneless chicken thighs
- 1 tbsp olive oil

**For the marinade:**

- 4cm ginger, peeled and grated
- 8 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed
- 2 lemongrass stalks, very finely chopped
- Handful of coriander stalks, chopped
- 3 tbsp maple syrup
- 100ml soy sauce
- Juice of 3 limes

**For the noodle salad:**

- 200g rice noodles
- 2 tbsp sesame oil
- 2 carrots, peeled and sliced into matchsticks
- 1/2 cucumber, peeled and sliced diagonally
- 5 radishes, thinly sliced
- 8 sugar snap peas, sliced lengthways
- 50g edamame beans

- 2 spring onions, thinly sliced
- 25g salted peanuts, toasted and crushed
- 25g sesame seeds, toasted

**For the dressing:**

- 2cm ginger, grated
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 shallots, finely chopped
- 2 red chillis, deseeded and chopped
- Small bunch of mint leaves
- Small bunch of coriander leaves
- 3 tbsp fish sauce
- 3 tbsp lime juice
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp maple syrup

**1** Mix the marinade in a bowl with the chicken, making sure to coat well, then refrigerate for two hours or overnight. Cook the noodles as per the packet instructions, then drain and douse in cold water. Mix with the sesame oil and add the rest of the salad ingredients. To make the dressing, whisk the ingredients in a bowl – add more or less chilli to taste.

**2** Set a griddle pan over a high heat and, once hot, add the oil. Cook the chicken in batches, turning it regularly, for around 10 minutes, until crispy on the outside and cooked through.

**3** Toss the noodles in the dressing with the nuts, oil and vegetables, and then arrange on a platter with the chicken on top. Garnish with extra toasted peanuts, sesame seeds, mint, coriander, thinly sliced chilli, lime wedges and spring onion. »



Crispy lemongrass  
chicken with glass  
noodles, mint and chilli







## TURMERIC SWEET-POTATO DHAL

So filling and warming, this is the sort of dish to serve as soon as guests come in from the cold. You can make it well in advance and heat it up on the night – it smells great, while being very healthy and delicious.

**SERVES:** 8

**PREPARATION TIME:**

20 minutes

**COOKING TIME:** 1 hour

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 onions, peeled and chopped
- 3cm ginger, peeled and grated
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 7 garlic cloves, peeled and sliced
- 1 tbsp cumin seeds
- 1 tbsp coriander seeds, crushed
- 3 whole bird's-eye chillies
- Small bunch of curry leaves
- 2 tbsp turmeric
- 2 sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 25g dried apricots, chopped
- 2 x 440g tins tomatoes
- 2 x 440g tins coconut milk
- 200ml vegetable stock
- 200g lentils, a mix of colours
- 2 tbsp coriander leaves, chopped

**1** Heat the oil in a pan over a low heat. Add the onion, ginger, cinnamon and garlic and sizzle for five minutes, until the onion is transparent. Turn the heat to medium, then add the cumin seeds, crushed coriander seeds, chilli and curry leaves and fry for five minutes, stirring so as not to burn.

**2** Add the turmeric, sweet potato and apricots and cook for another five minutes, followed by the tomato, coconut milk, stock and lentils. Bring to the boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 45 minutes. When ready to serve, remove the cinnamon sticks and sprinkle over the coriander. The flavours infuse as it cools, so don't worry if it doesn't get eaten when piping hot. Serve with pitta bread.

## SPICED CRAB ROLLS

Not only easy to eat as finger food while standing up, these rolls are remarkably filling. Full of fresh flavours, they feel lighter than your



Spiced crab rolls

average canapé. Serve on a platter with lime wedges for extra zing.

**MAKES:** 20

**PREPARATION TIME:**

25 minutes

**COOKING TIME:** 3 minutes

**For the crab rolls:**

- 2 tbsp coriander
- 2 tbsp mint
- 5cm ginger, peeled
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled
- 1 small red chilli, deseeded
- 30g frozen peas
- 1 lemongrass stick
- 3 spring onions
- Juice and zest of 1 lime
- 1 tbsp honey
- 600g crab meat
- 10 filo-pastry sheets
- Olive oil

**For the dipping sauce:**

- Juice of 3 limes
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsp rice wine vinegar

- 5cm ginger, grated
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1 red chilli, deseeded and chopped
- 2 spring onions, finely chopped
- Dash of sesame oil

**1** Make the dipping sauce by mixing all the ingredients in a bowl before setting aside. In a blender, blitz the coriander, mint, ginger, garlic, chilli, peas, lemongrass, spring onions, lime juice, zest and honey, until it looks like a paste. Season to taste, tip into a bowl and gently mix in the crab meat.

**2** Halve a sheet of filo lengthways so you have a long rectangle. Brush on a little oil, then spread one tablespoon of the crab mixture along the bottom of the pastry. Roll the filo, folding in the sides, making a cigar shape – the oil will act as a glue to seal the roll.

**3** Heat a pan with a little oil and then pan-fry your rolls, for three minutes, turning gently, until golden all over. Serve with the dipping sauce. »



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## WHITE CHOCOLATE AND COCONUT BALLS

Coconut is the flavour of the moment, and adding white chocolate makes these truffles feel more decadent. Serve towered on a plate – think a modern version of Ferrero Rocher.

**MAKES:** Around 15  
**PREPARATION TIME:**  
25 minutes

- 100g cashew nuts
- 200g good-quality white chocolate
- 80ml double cream
- 1 tsp ground cardamom
- 1 tsp coconut oil
- 1 tsp vanilla-bean paste
- 50g desiccated coconut

**1** Blitz the cashew nuts in a blender until they resemble breadcrumbs. Melt the chocolate in a large bowl over a pan of boiling water until smooth. Take it off the heat and stir

in the cream with the cardamom. Leave to infuse as it cools and, once at room temperature, add the oil, ground cashews, vanilla paste and 40g of the desiccated coconut, mixing everything together well.

**2** Using your hands, roll the mixture into little balls, around the size of a golf ball. Roll them in the remaining desiccated coconut so it sticks to their outsides, and keep in an airtight container for up to two days until you're ready to serve. »





Clementine and almond cake

## CLEMENTINE AND ALMOND CAKE

This gluten-free cake is very moist and sticky – the glaze has a tangy marmalade taste. It'll give people a lift if energy levels are starting to flag.

**SERVES:** 8-10

**PREPARATION TIME:**

20 minutes

**COOKING TIME:**

2 hours 40 minutes

- 6 clementines
- 6 eggs
- 200g ground almonds
- 200g granulated sugar, plus 1 tbsp
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tbsp icing sugar
- 1 cinnamon stick

**1** Put four of the clementines in a deep pan, covered with cold water, and bring to the boil. Reduce to a simmer and cook for two hours, checking they don't boil dry. Drain

and, when cool, cut each one in half and remove the seeds. Then finely chop or blitz the skins, pith, and fruit.

**2** Preheat the oven to 190°C/gas mark 5. Grease and line a springform tin with baking paper. Beat the eggs until fluffy, then add the clementine, almonds, sugar and baking powder.

**3** Pour the mixture into the tin and bake for 30 minutes. Put a skewer in the middle and if it comes out clean, it's ready – it may need up to 50 minutes in total, but cover the tin with foil after half an hour to stop it browning. Remove from the oven and leave to cool in the tin. When the cake is cold, take it out of the tin and dust with icing sugar.

**4** Finely slice the pith of the last two clementines, and keep aside. Squeeze the juice into a pan with a tablespoon of sugar and the cinnamon. Bring to the boil, then simmer for five minutes. Pour it over the cake and top with the pith. Serve with crème fraîche.

## PINEAPPLE, GINGER AND CHILLI VODKATINI

The chilli in this cocktail gives it a real kick and should mean people sip it a little slower. You will need a juicer, though blitzing everything in a blender and straining works almost as well. Make it in large jugs up to four hours before the party, keeping it in the fridge and giving it a good stir to refresh before serving.

**SERVES:** 4

**PREPARATION TIME:**

10 minutes

- 2.5cm ginger, peeled
- Half a pineapple, peeled and cored
- Small bunch of mint
- 1 small red chilli, deseeded
- Juice of 2 limes
- 150ml vodka
- 1 tbsp honey

**1** Juice the ginger, pineapple, mint and chilli, and mix with the remaining ingredients. Serve in a jug, either from the fridge or with ice.

## APPLE, CUCUMBER, BASIL AND MINT COOLER


It's always useful to have a non-alcoholic drink on hand, and this is a good alternative to all the sugary ones non-boozers tend to get served. Zestily refreshing, this also works with a shot or two of gin.

**SERVES:** 4

**PREPARATION TIME:**

10 minutes

- 3 Granny Smith apples
- Half a large cucumber
- 50g mint
- 50g basil
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 100ml sparkling water

**1** Juice the apples, cucumber, mint and basil, and mix with the remaining ingredients. Serve very cold over ice, in tall glasses, garnished with sprigs of mint and sliced cucumber. 

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cocktail recipes at  
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## COCKTAIL MAKING

# In the mix



A good cocktail recipe is the key ingredient to getting your party off with a bang, says Richard Godwin. And the easier to make, the better

Once, while I was stirring up a round of negronis for some guests, I came up with a theory. There are many tasks you must perform in life that take an inordinate amount of effort for the gratitude you get in return. Collecting parcels from the sorting office, washing up after scrambled eggs and most jobs associated with raising children all score low on the effort/joy matrix.

To compensate, there are a few tasks that take a surprisingly small amount of work given the appreciation you get back. And as I distributed the iced red beverages among my friends, it struck me that cocktails score pretty high. 'Oooh!' 'Negronis!' 'What sorcery is this?!' For a drink that isn't much harder to make than Ribena – and no more costly per serve than a rubbish Sauvignon Blanc – that's gratifying.

On one level, it's easy to see why cocktails inspire this level of reverence. Most people aren't familiar with all those peculiar bottles behind the bar and cocktails are too expensive to encourage experimentation when you're out on the town. There are also a lot of bartenders who are insufferably pretentious about the whole thing and make out that if you shake as opposed to stir a Manhattan, kittens will die. (They won't.) In short, there's a certain idea that cocktails are mystical things that must be treated with extreme care.

However, on a basic preparation level, they're really not that hard, provided you use a little common sense. The negroni is embarrassingly easy: one shot of gin, one shot of Campari, one shot of Italian vermouth (eg Martini Rosso), a slice of lemon for garnish. If you're making it for a large number of people, it's really

not cheating to make a jug.


If there's one rule to learn, it's

to serve spirits at the right temperature: arctic cold. Even the ropiest will be drinkable if you chill it, so you need as



much ice as possible. Start filling the freezer with containers of water a few days before a party (anything watertight will do). You can then hack the frozen bergs into rugged lumps, which not only look professional but will melt much slower than piddly little cubes.

And if all else fails, make punch – the word comes from the Hindi word for 'five' and refers to the five elements: sourness (lemons or limes), sweetness (sugar, syrups, cordials or liqueurs), strength (strong booze), dilution (water, tea or fruit juice) and spice (anything you feel like using to pep it up at the end). I've adapted an old Victorian rhyme to help you remember the proportions: one of sweet, two sour, three of weak, four of power. As long as you keep tasting for balance (be sure to count the ice as part of your 'weak' element, and subtract sweetener if you're using something that's already sweet to dilute) you shouldn't go far wrong. I made a pretty decent one with elderflower cordial, lime juice, gin and chamomile tea recently.

One last tip: invest all of £10 in a bottle of Angostura bitters. No one ever thinks to bring this happy little bottle to a party – yet no ingredient is as reliable or versatile. A drop in pretty much anything makes it taste better. Plus, it fits in the handbag, too. Thank me later.   
*The Spirits: A Guide To Modern Cocktailmaking by Richard Godwin (Square Peg, £16.99)*

## GINGER ROGERS PUNCH

Here's a reliable crowd-pleaser you can make with ingredients available in all decent corner shops. Essentially, it's a hybrid of a mojito and a mule – but it's fresh and spicy enough to appeal to all palates. Bourbon, rum and brandy will work just as well – though only use vodka in emergencies.

### SERVES: 6

- 6 mint sprigs
- 3 limes
- 300ml gin
- 500ml ginger beer (the fiery Jamaican sort works best)
- Angostura bitters

Gently bruise the mint in the bottom of a jug. Slice the limes into quarters, squeeze them in and throw in the spent shells, too. Pour in the gin, add enough ice to comfortably rise above the gin line and churn. Top up with ginger beer and an indecent amount of Angostura, stirring carefully. Strain into tall glasses filled with additional ice, garnished with mint and/or lime.



# Fern Britton's

## MUSHROOM BREAKFASTS

*“Breakfast is the most important meal and mushrooms make the perfect ingredient. They're a filling and flavoursome way to start the day.”*

### Shopping list

1

Spicy mushrooms on toast (for 1):

- 2 slices of ciabatta
- 200g chestnut mushrooms
- 1 knob of butter
- Dash of Worcester sauce
- 1 tbs of crème fraiche

2

Fern's tasty weekend breakfast (for 4):

- 12 large chestnut mushrooms
- 8 rashers of smoked back bacon
- 4 eggs
- Cherry vine tomatoes
- Olive oil
- 1 garlic clove

For full recipes visit  
[www.justaddmushrooms.com](http://www.justaddmushrooms.com)

**NOT ONLY** are mushrooms a natural source of vitamin B<sup>5</sup>, (helping to reduce tiredness and fatigue), they are also low in fat. Just 80g or about four mushrooms make up 1 of your 5 a day, making them the perfect ingredient to help you start your day. For inspiration on how you and your family can enjoy mushrooms as part of breakfast, lunch or dinner, visit [www.justaddmushrooms.com](http://www.justaddmushrooms.com)



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**Copper and aluminium candlestick,** £40, Oliver Bonas

**Aluminium and brass frog ornament,** £19, West Elm

**Stainless steel cake slice,** £10, Anthropologie

**Glass vase,** £11.99, Homebase

**Wedgwood bone china side plate,** £36, John Lewis

**Horn spoons,** £45 for four, Heal's

**Acrylic-mix throw,** £25, Next

**Metal bowl,** £7.99, H&M Home

EMERGENCY GIFTS

# LAST-MINUTE LUXE LIST

**Ceramic marble-effect chopping board,** £9.99, H&M Home

**Metal and copper lamp,** £24.99, Homebase

**Aluminium and plastic espresso coffee maker,** £49, Alessi at Selfridges

**Wood clock,** £40, Habitat

**Makers of East London** by Charlotte Schreiber and Katie Treggiden (Hoxton Mini Press), £30 at Waterstones

**Stainless steel and wood cocktail set,** £40, Habitat

**Ceramic tea cup and saucer,** £18, Urban Outfitters

**Chipboard frame,** £17.99, Zara Home

**Glass vase,** £28 LSA at House of Fraser

See our guide to present wrapping at [REDONLINE.CO.UK](http://REDONLINE.CO.UK)



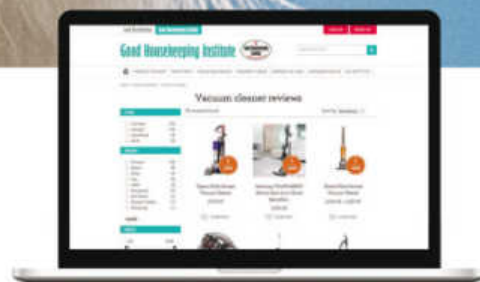
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# Escapes

Edited by SASKA GRAVILLE

## WE WENT, WE LOVED, *we want to go back*

Team *Red* loves to travel, so where are the places that we've fallen for in the past 12 months – and think you should put in your diary for 2016? We share our favourites



### MOROCCAN ROMANCE

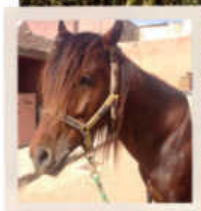
**It doesn't get more romantic than cantering on beaches and starlight campfires, says Kim Parker**

A dusty camping trip with no running water, no loos and a couple of sleeping bags for a bed certainly doesn't sound like the most romantic holiday on earth. But factor in a pair of beautiful Arab-barb stallions, a softly-carpeted Berber tent and campfires beneath starry skies and you can see why my boyfriend and I totally fell for our horse-trekking trip in Morocco.

For our first proper holiday together, we booked a two-day »



*The peaceful Moroccan landscape*



**FROM TOP:** Kim's horse Zingaro; the couple enjoyed a cosy camp; a trek along the Moroccan coast; nearby city of Essaouira



hack from Ranch de Diabat, which specialises in horse and camel treks in the surrounding countryside, just outside the coastal city of Essaouira. There, we saddled up behind Hassan, our knowledgeable guide, who led us through some amazing landscapes – everything from scrubby desert to sandy dunes and lunar-like boulder fields, the view changing every few hours as we rode.

At sunset on our first day, we entered an ancient argan forest and found a cosy tent set up for us, complete with our suitcases

and a table set with a delicious chicken tagine supper. We watched shooting stars by a roaring campfire and fell asleep to the sounds of our horses, Zingaro and Dallas, snuffling in the dark.

Day two saw us galloping across grassy bluffs and wide, windswept beaches (deserted, save for a singular camel train), before spending another starry evening cuddled up in our comfy tent, this time pitched in a quiet cove just a few hours' ride from Ranch de Diabat. The next day, we rode back to the ranch and from there headed back to civilisation, with sand in our hair and huge smiles on our faces. We may not have had hot showers or flushing loos on our trek, but let me tell you, we had the time of our lives.

### What to pack

**Leather luggage tag.** £10, The Cambridge Satchel Company

**Suede and faux-fur boots.** £195, Russell & Bromley

**Denim shirt.** £225, Kenzo at Net-A-Porter

**Acetate glasses.** £50, Le Specs at Matchesfashion.com

**Olympus PEN E-PL7 camera.** £499.95, John Lewis

### TRIP NOTES

A four-night trip costs around £354 per person, based on two sharing, and includes airport transfers, a night's b&b accommodation in Essaouira either side, a two-day horse trek from Ranch de Diabat ([ranchdediabat.com](http://ranchdediabat.com)), all trek meals, private tent and sleeping bags; [naturallymorocco.co.uk](http://naturallymorocco.co.uk)



### Quirky London

#### Saska Graville fell for the charms of this new London hotel

There are many hotels in London, but I've never stayed in one quite like newly opened The Zetter Townhouse Marylebone. For a start, there's the myth of the Georgian house's former 'owner', Wicked Uncle Seymour. This fictional eccentric is the muse for the hotel's quirky decor, with the spoils of his European grand tour scattered across every surface. The results – cabinets of curiosities and a lot of wall-mounted ceramics – make the place feel more like a country pile than a London hotel.

Eccentricity is all very well, but a hotel also needs to deliver on hospitality. It's here that The Zetter Marylebone's heritage kicks in. From the team behind The Zetter Townhouse in Clerkenwell, it comes ready-made with the attention to detail required. For all the immersive theatre-like mood, you want your room to offer calm. And room decor is done by design maestro Russell Sage. There are REN goodies and a Roberts radio in the bathroom, and a Hypnos bed (the Rolls-Royce of mattresses). Uncle Seymour's vibe can be felt, but Uncle Russell has interpreted it tastefully.

But there's no point staying at The Zetter Marylebone if you don't like a bit of drama. Embrace the quirks and raise a glass to wicked Uncle Seymour.



**FROM TOP:** A Russell Sage-designed room; The Zetter Townhouse's eccentric interior

### TRIP NOTES

Doubles from £258 per night, room only; [thezettertownhouse.com](http://thezettertownhouse.com)





## DEVON HEAVEN

**Adults, teens and tinies all loved this grandly restored manor house in Devon, says Sarah Bailey**

Experts in the field of joint family holidays may well have counselled against my optimistically hatched plan – a week in off-ish season Devon, sharing quarters with my childhood best friend, her three feisty teenage daughters and my household of rambunctious boy children. However, I can happily



**FROM TOP:** Pickwell Manor's stunning exterior; the decor is Scandi-cool-meets-historic; quirky Brit-pop style at Damien Hirst's The Quay; famous surf spot Croyde is nearby; Sarah's son Harry tries surfing

report that our eight-go-mad in the magical, mystical fields and sands of north Devon was easily the most sublime travel adventure of my year.

We were all bewitched

by the soothing grandeur of our surroundings – Pickwell Manor – a manor house dating back to the 10-century and exquisitely restored, with easy access to some of the best surfing beaches in England.

We stayed in the Bliss apartment which felt swishy and voluminous (the entire kid party slept in a massive dorm with an en suite bathroom, no wonder our trip was so harmonious!). Decoration was all contemporary greys, grand historic details, with a touch of soothing Scandi-cool stirred in, and a bright white modern kitchen allowed us to get down to some proper cooking.

Pickwell Manor hospitality is all about imagination and generosity – with tennis courts, giant chess and

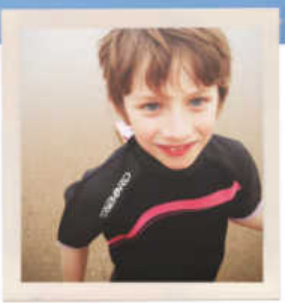
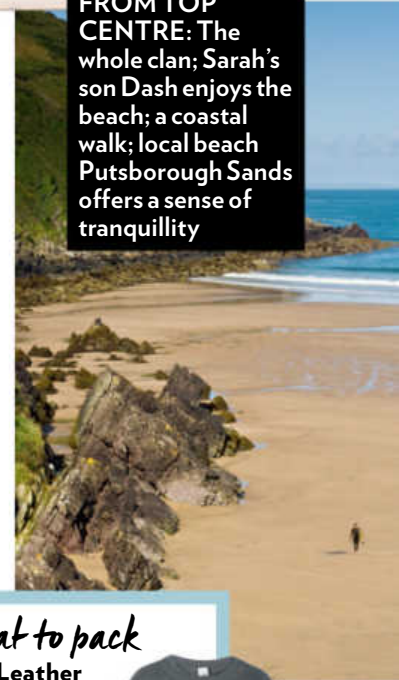
a charming, home-made pirate treasure hunt to discover in the six acres of gardens and grounds. The owners will light a fire pit in their favourite barbecue spot if you want to eat outdoors or just enjoy the stars. A bountiful supply of wetsuits and all kinds of beach kit from kids' buggies to backpacks is all available to borrow, with no fiddly extras. There's even an honesty shop, too, which sums up the prevailing attitude of the place.

Our days revolved around ambles to the beach (20 minutes down a steep path) and rookie surf attempts. Croyde is the most famous nearby surf spot (a quick car-ride from Pickwell), but the local beach of Putsborough Sands suited us best, giving us a sense of being alone in nature.

A slightly longer car jaunt to Ilfracombe takes you into the world of faded grandeur (the hand-carved Victorian bathing pools, The Tunnels, are absolutely dreamy); and a regeneration mission by one surf-crazy artist Damien Hirst who lives nearby and appears to be taking over the harbour one heroic feminist statue (*Verity*) and fabulous-looking – but sadly disappointing when we were there – restaurant (The Quay; 11thequay.co.uk) at a time. Do visit Mermaid Vintage UK for purse-friendly, cute finds. I snapped up a shirt which even the *Red* fashion team mistook for a Dries Van Noten number. We'll be back. >>



**FROM TOP CENTRE:** The whole clan; Sarah's son Dash enjoys the beach; a coastal walk; local beach Putsborough Sands offers a sense of tranquillity



### What to pack

**Rubber wellies,** £115, Hunter

**Leather pouch,** £195, Aspal of London

**Wool jumper,** £135, Iris & Ink

**Wool coat,** £89.95, Gap

**Wool hat,** £45, Happy Knitwear

**Nylon washbag,** £225, Anya Hindmarch

### TRIP NOTES

Off-peak long weekend breaks, from £295, based on two sharing a one-bedroom self-catering apartment; pickwellmanor.co.uk





## HIPSTER AMSTERDAM

**Why did she wait so long to visit Amsterdam, asks Hannah Dunn**

I'd long associated Amsterdam with hen parties and stag dos, dismissing it as a rowdy weekend, not a perfect city break. So the last thing I expected was to fall in love.

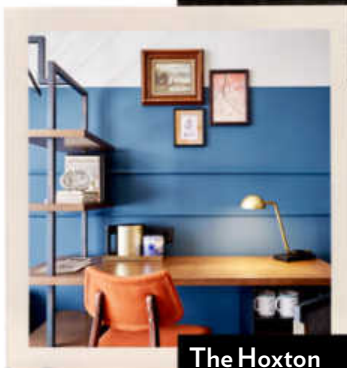
But from the moment I stepped out of Amsterdam Centraal railway station and on to a busy crisscross of roads, where bicycles fly from all directions and canals drop away from the pavements, I was sold. It's quite simply the coolest city I've ever been to.

That may have something to do with The Hoxton. Sister to its London venues in Shoreditch and Holborn, it's the hotel group's first venture abroad (with

spots in Paris and New York planned), and they've perfected the formula.

The decor is achingly hip; the open-plan reception-cum-bar-cum-restaurant is a mishmash of velvet couches and buttery leather chairs, set against off-white walls and grey tiles.

Upstairs, the rooms are all dark brooding blues, pops of orange velvet, and the softest grey throws. The fridge is left empty for you to fill with supermarket-priced treats (available from



**The Hoxton Amsterdam is set right on the canal; the decor is stylish and serene**

the front desk), and come morning a paper bag of fresh juice, bananas and yoghurt is left hanging on your door.

Outside, little boutiques and art galleries line the banks of the canals, while

a steady stream of boats chug up and down the water. Pit stops should be taken at George WPA (cafegeorge.nl), where we dined on smoked salmon and scrambled eggs. Night-time drinks come courtesy of Door 74 (door-74.com), a little speakeasy which serves up an impressive selection of cocktails. Order The Birds And Bees and make sure your name is on the door before you arrive.

But it's the next day, waking up in my giant double bed and sunbathing in Vondelpark among the locals, that I realise I don't ever want to leave.

### TRIP NOTES

Doubles from £65 per night, including a breakfast bag; [thehoxton.com](http://thehoxton.com)



## Nantucket dreaming

**Blue hydrangeas, picket fences... Nantucket has it all, says Pip McCormac**

Imagine the whole of the New England aesthetic concentrated on one island, and you've got Nantucket. And it's only a half-hour ferry ride from Hyannis.

Based in a self-contained house, one of The Cottages at Boat Basin right on the harbour, our world was very small. Perfectly formed.

The best way to see Nantucket is by bike (The Cottages come with their own). Cycling the breadth of the island in half an hour to the sand dunes of Madaket Beach, hewn with long grasses and cobalt ocean, the only requirement is a towel.

Sunsets are spent over cocktails at Galley Beach Bar (galleybeach.net) – just down the road from Tommy Hilfiger's house – white wooden chair legs anchored in the sand. Dinner is back in the main town around the port, at The Club Car (theclubcar.com; white linen, lobsters, Heather Locklear on the next table) or under the stars at Cru (crunantucket.com), serving freshly caught oysters.

Nantucket runs on its own time, a serene haven where the days and drinks are pleasantly long. Hire a car from JFK airport and drop it off in Hyannis, knowing that your perfect holiday is just ahead. 📌

**Book a Red-approved minibreak at [REDONLINE.CO.UK](http://REDONLINE.CO.UK)**

### TRIP NOTES

The Cottages and Lofts at the Boat Basin from £113 per room per night; [nantucketislandresorts.com](http://nantucketislandresorts.com)

**FROM TOP:** Nantucket's iconic shingled buildings; The Cottages' chic style; the island has a dreamy aesthetic



Photographs Getty Images. Exchange rates on xecom using live rates at time of going to press. Red accepts no responsibility for prices having changed since then. For stockist details, see the Directory



### What to pack

**Metal sunglasses,** £125, Ray-Ban

**Denim jeans,** £40, Topshop

**Cotton sweatshirt,** £100, Etre Cécile

**Leather bag,** £149, Radley

**Nylon suitcase,** £104, Kipling





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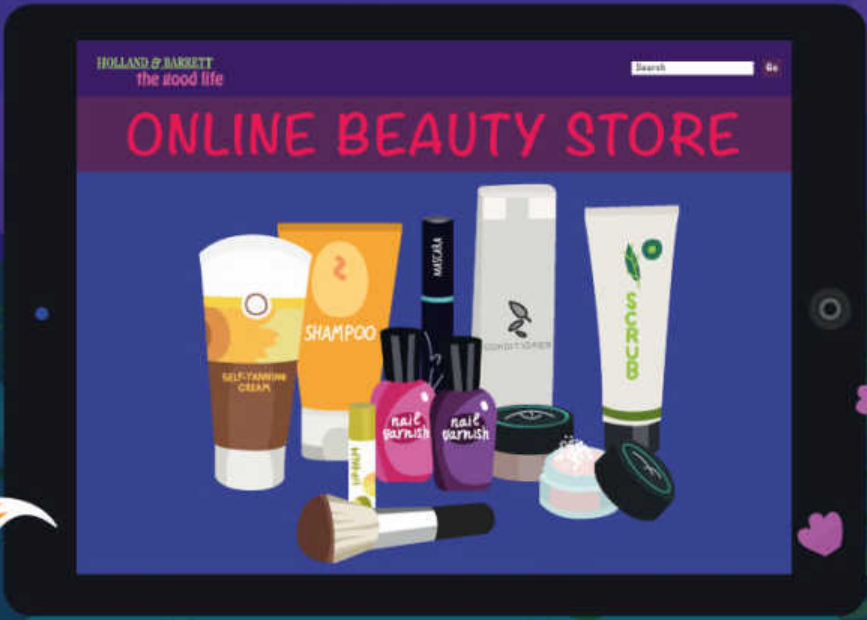
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## POUR YOURSELF *a cup* OF CALM

Photograph LOUISA PARRY

If you're maxed out on stress, holy basil may just be your cup of tea.

When health hacker Kevin Gianni was on a mission to find what works for wellbeing, for his book, *Kale And Coffee*, he discovered the herb holy basil, aka tulsi.

'It's rare to take a supplement and actually feel something,' says Gianni, of the first time he tried it. 'It's even rarer to take one and feel this good. Holy basil is the closest thing to a short-term stress solution I've found.'

A cousin to the basil you'd find in the supermarket, holy basil has been used in Ayurvedic healing in India for thousands of years. So how does it work? It's an adaptogen, which means, like ginseng, it helps balance the body's stress response. You can take it as a tincture, as a capsule or even easier, in a teabag (Try Pukka Three Tulsi, £2.39 for 20 teabags, or Pukka Wholistic Holy Basil, £15.95 for 30 capsules, both at [revital.co.uk](http://revital.co.uk)). We're stocking up for ourselves – and for friends and family. 🍵



# WHAT IS YOUR FACE TELLING YOU?

Gluten, sugar, wine or dairy – Brigid Moss meets the woman who says she can tell your personal skin-ageing triggers just by looking at your face

Illustrations BARBARA DZIADOSZ

‘Looking at you, I see Sugar Face,’ says naturopathic doctor Nigma Talib, ‘in the redness around your cheeks, the little bit of jowls and inflammation on the cheekbones. And I can see Dairy Face, in the puffiness under your eyes and around your eyelids.’

I was expecting to have my skin flaws pointed out, although maybe not so many of them. Dr Nigma Talib – or Dr Nigma as she’s usually called – has become renowned among beauty editors for her ‘skin mapping’ method, for being able to pinpoint whether you’ve been eating too much sugar, dairy or gluten or drinking too much wine, from where you have redness, dark shading, sagging, lines, puffiness and/or spots.

‘I look at texture and puffiness as signs of premature ageing,’ says Dr Nigma. ‘Most people have a combination of two or more faces of ageing. Some have all four so they’re ageing prematurely very quickly.’ I got off relatively lightly, it seems.

I can’t see a single line on Dr Nigma’s 43-year-old skin – she could pass for 35, maybe even 30. Trained as a naturopathic doctor (not the same as a medical doctor) in Canada, she’s always used an inside-out, holistic approach with patients. But, she says, in her 15 plus years of practice, she noticed when she dealt with inner problems – gut issues or hormone imbalances – patients’ skin improved in texture, firmness, brightness. ‘Eventually it got to a point where I realised there was a clear correlation between a change in the health of someone’s gut or their diet and their skin.’

Famous clients followed. Penelope Cruz says Dr Nigma’s ‘unique and natural approach reveals your skin-ageing triggers and fixes them with simple dietary and supplementary changes’. And there are endorsements from Sienna Miller and make-up artist Charlotte Tilbury on the front of Dr Nigma’s new book, *Reverse The Signs Of Ageing*.

**I’VE HEARD BEFORE FROM DERMATOLOGISTS THAT SUGAR IS AGEING FOR THE SKIN.** And nobody’s skin looks good on a morning-after. But why dairy and gluten as well, I ask? ‘These four foods cause “gut-flammation”,’ she says. ‘When your gut is suffering, your skin is, too. Gut-flammation is like a fire burning inside the gut, damaging everything it touches.’

Skin signs, says Dr Nigma, are just one way your body is showing you you’re eating the wrong things. And the damage can show up after a short time – even a big weekend. ‘Anyone who comes to see me for skin will





## DAIRY FACE

have to deal with their inside body health,' she says.

Sugar, she tells me, causes an imbalance in gut bacteria and leads to hardening of collagen in skin. Wine is full of sugar, plus isn't good for gut bacteria and dehydrates skin. Dairy, she says, 'is a very difficult protein to digest. Some people can eat some dairy, and some people shouldn't even eat a little. It depends on your sensitivity.' Gluten – well, don't get Dr Nigma started on gluten. 'Gluten is a pro-inflammatory food which is toxic to the gut lining because it's often not digested properly, so causes leaky gut.'

## FROM THE INSIDE OUT

In Dr Nigma's book, everyone is advised to start the 12-week plan by excluding these four agers –gluten, sugar, wine and dairy, and add gut-friendly foods, such as bone broth, rich in gut-healing glutamine.

'You don't need to have an official intolerance to a food for it to create changes in your skin,' she writes in her book. 'Many foods can do this if you just eat more of the item than your body can tolerate – and the signs are so predictable in the ways that they manifest that over the years I've got to a point that I can tell exactly what people have been overeating simply by looking at them.'

I say I can do four weeks before my deadline. 'Is that long enough to reverse the ageing you've pointed out?' I ask. 'I see a change in all my patients,' she says. 'If this doesn't improve I will be shocked. It's not easy. But the results are worth it.'

After the 12 weeks, you can do the plan only 80% of the time. Dr Nigma confesses she had pizza the previous night. 'Of course I'm not 100%, life would be boring, but if you want results you have to try it first. I've got Gluten Face this morning,' she says, pointing to what she says is puffiness around her cheekbones (I can't see it).

The diet does sound like the ultimate in faddy 'clean' eating, but Dr Nigma assures me it includes all the key nutrients. And the plan does have a basis in two theories with increasing backing in science: that inflammation is



**You DON'T need to have an official INTOLERANCE to a food for it to create changes in your SKIN**

at the root of many ageing diseases including cancer and heart disease, and that the gut and its resident bacteria are important to health in ways research is only just uncovering, from mental health to weight. Leaky gut as a cause of food intolerances and health problems, once a fringe-y 'natural' diagnosis, is now gaining medical credence. Blaming specific foods for skin symptoms, though, is more contentious. Dr Nigma developed face mapping using Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), which examines the face as part of a diagnosis of what's happening in the body.

## DOING THE PLAN

So I started my four weeks. My day began with green tea, because I found Earl Grey undrinkable with plant milk, although coffee was bearable with coconut milk. Breakfast was easy: toasted Biona buckwheat rice wholegrain bread or rice cakes with boiled eggs and/or avocado. I found non-dairy, non-wheat options at Pret A Manger or Leon for lunch or had leftovers, and could pretty much eat most of my normal suppers.

Each week, I boiled up the bones of our roast chicken to make bone broth, and added it to curries, stews and »

soups. I took my supplements (see below) religiously, made a green smoothie every afternoon.

Dr Nigma is right – sticking to the diet wasn't easy. I missed Greek yoghurt, Parmesan, cappuccino and hated being a food bore when out. I did drink a glass of wine twice, but only a small one. I noticed I had more energy.

Week two, I could feel my tights were looser and, as Dr Nigma had promised, the skin looked tighter around my eyes, hugging the sockets. 'It's as if you've had a mini eye lift,' a friend said. But what I noticed most was higher energy and clearer thinking.

But then in week three, watching *Gogglebox*, I ate 12 Quality Street from the back of the cupboard (I counted the wrappers. This is why I don't do diets). The next morning, in the mirror, my eyes were so puffy I looked as if I hadn't slept at all. If I hadn't been completely convinced before, that diet could make such a visible difference, the proof was staring me in the face.

I like that my four weeks on the diet made me eat less sugar (most of the time), drink less wine, and swap Earl Grey for green tea. When I asked Dr Nigma if her patients could stick to the diet she said, yes, of course, because they see the change. If my face were going to be in HD on a cinema screen like Sienna, I'd do it too. Could I do the full 12 weeks? Probably, but only at 80%. After all, that's only 5.5 days a week of being a food bore. *Reverse The Signs Of Ageing* by Dr Nigma Talib (Vermilion, £12.99)

## WHAT I DID ON THE PLAN

**1 I cut out (most) dairy, alcohol, sugar and gluten.** (NB. If you cut out any food groups, make sure you're doing it with expert guidance). To my usual rice I added in buckwheat, quinoa, lentils, sweet potatoes and butternut squash. I ate anchovies and sardines for calcium, as well as daily broccoli, kale or watercress, beans and pulses, nuts and seeds.

**2 I took a multi-strain probiotic.** Dr Nigma has one: Healthy Flora (£46.96 for 30 capsules, healthydoc.com), with prebiotics to feed the good bacteria and anti-inflammatory grape seed extract for skin. 'Most people I see are deficient in vitamin D, magnesium and iron,' says Dr Nigma. Her blood test also showed my thyroid was borderline underactive. My other daily supplements: vitamin D, vitamin B Complex, magnesium at night and a thyroid support complex with iodine, zinc and selenium.

**3 I ate for a healthy gut.** I made a daily green smoothie with mostly veg, some fruit, and ate more vegetables and lentils. 'If you go, you glow,' is one of Dr Talib's mantras. If your waste matter hangs around, she says, toxins are reabsorbed into the body and some are excreted via the skin. I ate more slowly, to chew better to increase the amount of saliva coming into contact with the food as that's the start of digestion. 🍴



## FACE FOOD

**Skin-boosting salad dressing**  
Shake these ingredients in a jar

- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- Juice of half a lemon
- 1-2 pinches turmeric
- 1 pinch sea salt
- Black pepper to taste

**Complexion-perfecting bowl**  
Serve with Skin-boosting salad dressing

- 50g (dry weight) brown or green lentils, cooked
- 2-3 tsp bone broth or good quality stock
- 3-4 asparagus, chopped
- 1 leek, chopped
- 1/2 red pepper, chopped
- 100g broccoli
- 25g pine nuts

For more on Dr Nigma's Age Reversal programme, go to [REDONLINE.CO.UK](http://REDONLINE.CO.UK)



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hours and my  
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great all day'

CHERYL, 39, ASCOT



# Breathe CONFIDENCE

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**W**hether you're dehydrated from sitting at your desk, or you've had a coffee-fuelled all-nighter to get that presentation done, there are a number of factors that can lead to unpleasant breath at work. Most Brits would admit theirs is in need of refreshing and when you have colleagues and clients to impress, this couldn't be more important.

Of course, we know the common causes of foul breath – coffee, alcohol and smoking – however, skipping breakfast for an early-morning meeting or going for a quick lunchtime gym session can also take its toll on your breath. Feeling like yours might not be the freshest can also have a huge impact on your confidence – especially at work. So how do you get around it? Try CB12.

## LONG-LASTING

CB12, the experts in first-class breath, have developed a premium mouthwash with a powerful,

unique and patented formula of zinc acetate and chlorhexidine, which effectively neutralises odour. It's a mouthwash that everybody can use as part of their daily routine. The long-lasting effect is scientifically-proven to offer 12 hours of protection\*\*, helping you to stay breath confident from that breakfast meeting right through to your after-work drinks.

Available in two varieties – mint/menthol and mild mint/menthol – it contains fluoride to help strengthen tooth enamel and prevent tooth decay, making it a powerful and unique mouthwash combination.

## KEEP COOL

For a burst of minty flavour at your desk, CB12 Boost is a sugar-free chewing gum that is perfect when you have to dash into a last-minute meeting – and it contains just three calories. Keep CB12 Boost close at hand for unstoppable confidence, wherever your day takes you.

'76% of users\* said that CB12 Boost gave them more confidence in their breath'


## FRESH THINKING

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for a pack of 10,  
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at Boots nationwide



For more information on  
how to maintain first-class  
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A man and a woman are dancing in a modern living room. The woman, with short blonde hair, is wearing a bright blue dress and a light blue cardigan. She is smiling and looking up. The man, with grey hair, is wearing a white shirt and a dark vest. He is looking at her and smiling. The room has a wooden floor, a grey rug, and a large window in the background.

She can say  
goodbye to pain,  
without pills.

(I wish she wouldn't rub it in.)



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## FITNESS

# FINDING MY #FITSPO

Dolly Alderton had never come across an exercise she liked, so *Red* sent her to try out six new classes. Did she sink or swim?

Photograph SUKIDHANDA

**G**od, exercise is boring. And hard. In the past, I have done the treadmill, the step machine, the cross trainer. Running, swimming. I spent all of summer 2009 in Fitness First Pinner, sometimes pausing to have a prawn sandwich from the local M&S for lunch and going back for session two. I've tried Zumba, Bikram yoga, the Couch to 5k app. And I have never enjoyed a single minute of it.

The post-exercise buzz is faintly there – a hum more than a buzz – but I never look back and think, 'Yeah, that evening spent in tremendous pain in the gym, that was worth it for the 10 minutes of feeling energetic and loose-muscled afterwards.'

But I can't dodge exercise any more. For one, I am stressed out constantly and, I'm told, it's the most powerful way to remedy this. I also really love food and don't have the will to diet. And so many people seem to #love their exercise on Instagram. So I make this my mission: to try the latest classes in a week in the hope something will click, become my fitness passion.

## CLASS 1

### HULAFIT

The class begins gently – Hula Hooping with a weighted hoop to a cracking Nineties soundtrack. At first the hoop drops a few times, but I'm amazed at how quickly I get the hang of keeping it up on my waist.

We then move on to turning with the hoop and jumping towards another person with oddly aggressive and sexual hip thrusts to *Mambo No 5*. A lot of larking about, but 20 minutes in and I realise I have accidentally broken a pretty impressive sweat. Accidental exercise – my favourite.



Dolly Alderton gives Stand-up paddleboard (SUP) yoga a go on the Paddington Basin

We then put the hoops down and do circuits around the room, which makes me realise – as I puff – I am comfortably the most unfit woman in the room. Just when I think my spirit is broken, it's time to try to get the hoop from our waist up to around our boobs without hands. We're told to really engage our shoulder blades and chest muscles (easier than it sounds). We all look terrible – flapping around like we're in *Chicken Run*.

**VERDICT:** Fun, but I'd bring a pal to laugh with next time. [hulafit.com](http://hulafit.com)

## CLASS 2

### VOGA

I arrive at the cool east-London location to hear a disco soundtrack and see a chic instructor in retro Lycra bopping her ponytail while in downward dog. In this fusion of yoga and voguing (the catwalk-inspired dance trend big in 1980s New York), I recognise some traditional yoga poses, but every time we get into one, there's a Voga twist. Be it posing elegantly with arms and hands, pulsing with dance moves or popping our hips in time with the music. And WHAT music: Prince, Diana Ross and »

Madonna make it impossible not to move.

**VERDICT:** I love Voga. It's camp, it's hard, it's energising, it gets you pumped for a night out with the same effect as a French 75 (cognac, champagne, sugar and lemon juice, if you're asking).

[vogalondon.co.uk](http://vogalondon.co.uk)

## CLASS 3

### BARRE

I arrive for my Barre class at Heartcore thinking this will be the The Thing. I loved ballet as a teenager and have often thought about taking it up again, even at the risk of looking like an overgrown Fantasia ostrich.

But Barre isn't what I expected.

Our instructor – a wonderfully encouraging man with fantastic posture and the same undetectable accent as the wedding planner from *Father Of The Bride* – is the highlight of the 55 minutes. This is a toning class, so we do sets of exercises for every part of the body on mats and the barre. If you're keen on exercise already, I think this would be perfect as the isolated tiny movements are incredibly strenuous and must reshape your body over time.

**VERDICT:** I bore easy with this stuff. Not enough bells and whistles to distract me from the physical pain.

[heartcore.co.uk](http://heartcore.co.uk)

## CLASS 4

### HIGH INTENSITY INTERVAL TRAINING

I feel a sense of impending doom as I enter the very smart west-London GymClass and see weights, bars on the ceiling, bikes, a disconcertingly toned and gorgeous instructor and three super-fit women who are joining me in the class.

The gym was founded by cult instructor Helle Hammonds, whose method involves HIIT plus resistance training in a full-on 55-minute session. In other words, it's bloody, bloody hard. This class is one of the most physically intense things I've ever done. I try to plough through it all – the planks, the push-ups, the weights, the biking, but it's so hardcore I often can't finish each set. I've never sweated so much – at one point I think I'm crying, but it's just sweat pouring out of my eyeballs. But, to my utter shock, my body has never felt as good as it feels after this class.

**VERDICT:** I can't imagine how incredible this class would feel once I'm vaguely fit and could actually do the class. The endorphins have found me once and for all.

[gym-class.co.uk](http://gym-class.co.uk)

## CLASS 5

### STAND-UP PADDLEBOARD (SUP) YOGA

An import from hotter climes, yoga on a stand-up paddleboard has reached London – on the Paddington Basin. Sounds difficult? It is! But my instructor Jennifer understands how unnatural and scary it feels to just sit on a floating paddleboard, let alone do warrior pose, so she lets me take my time. I'm surprised at how much harder even the simplest movements are when you're trying to stay balanced on the board and although this

is tremendously effective at keeping my mind present and alert, I also find it quite stressful.

By the end I'm standing and, as Jennifer promised, it really isn't as unstable as I thought it was going to be. Staying afloat means really engaging your core and concentrating on the poses. It's actually quite peaceful, floating around the canal.

**VERDICT:** If you can get over your fear of falling in, SUP yoga really feels effective, especially for the core. But your mind can't drift off like it can in regular yoga, which I prefer.

[active360.co.uk](http://active360.co.uk)

## CLASS 6

### TRAPEZE FIT

I can't lie, I am absolutely knackered by the time I get to this. Every muscle in my body is aching at this point.

Trapeze fit is by far the hardest thing to pick up. Getting even just my toes up on to the trapeze takes 10 attempts, let alone hooking my legs on to the thing. My fear of heights holds me back, even though the instructors keep me feeling safe and are very helpful. They even manage to get me sitting upright on the trapeze.

But halfway through the class, my hands are red-raw from grappling at the bar and my biceps and shoulders – confused by all this sudden exercise – have given up. From the sidelines, I watch my more advanced classmates elegantly twist and bend and arch around the ropes. They all look like they're having loads of fun while doing something tiring.

**VERDICT:** You'd have to really stick with this to see improvement, but it's more interesting than a treadmill.

[flyingfantastic.co.uk](http://flyingfantastic.co.uk)

The experiment is over and I am dumbfounded. I've found not one but *two* types of exercise I actually really enjoyed: I'm going to do Voga on a Saturday before I go out dancing and plan in a weekly HIIT session, too. But now, if you'll excuse me, I'm going to run myself a hot bath and may never get out. 📌

For lots more new classes nationwide, go to [REDONLINE.CO.UK](http://REDONLINE.CO.UK)

Hair and make-up: Lindsey Poole. Styling: Lauren T. Franks. Dolly wears: Jumper, Sweaty Betty. Vest, Lucas Hugh. Trousers, Nike at Net-A-Porter



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## INTIMACY

# MY NEW YEAR'S WISH: AN ORGASM

After 18 months without an orgasm, one anonymous writer's anxiety about sex was becoming overwhelming. Could she learn to enjoy it?



**B**en\* pulls me into a hug, lets out a long sigh. We slip into an awkward silence that's wholly out of place in a relationship well into its sixth year. I feel my anxiety rising. 'It's not you,' I say, 'I think it's common, I mean, not unusual.'

Maybe it's my hormones. Please, please, though, don't think it's because I don't fancy you any more.'

'Is it something I'm doing wrong?' he asks. *Is it that he's doing something wrong?* I think. 'No, of course you're not!' I tell him. But, if truth be told, I don't know why I've not been able to orgasm for a year and a half. And, in fact, why it's never been easy to reach climax.

A week later, I'm booked in for a Skype call with US sex educator Dr Emily Nagoski. I have volunteered to interview her because I heard her book, *Come As You Are*, was being hailed as a game changer. Reading it, I can see why it went straight on to *The New York Times* bestseller list; Nagoski has a fresh, informal way of sharing her combination of sexuality research and brain science.

I was still nervous before speaking to her, though. I wasn't sure I'd be able to be upfront about our problems.

But I had nothing to worry about. Nagoski has a crop of bright blue hair, a big smile and a lorry-load of wit, a far cry from the Carrie Bradshaw type I was expecting. Her open, friendly manner leaves me feeling I could tell her anything and she wouldn't flinch.

She listens to my story intently. Ben and I have been official for two years but for four years before that we

were 'seeing' each other. When we met, I used to wonder if I wanted sex *too* much. We'd meet up, have sex and I'd have orgasms at least... well... once in every three times. I tell her I've now got to the state where even thinking about sex makes me anxious.

'The research says that by age 28, 12% of women have never had an orgasm as far as they know,' Nagoski told me. 'Non-cordance is a thing!' she reassures me.

Non-cordance is where your bodily functions do not relate to your level of arousal. 'Just because it's not going on down there, just because you're not getting wet or orgasming doesn't mean you're not attracted to your partner – and, most importantly, it doesn't mean you are broken,' Nagoski says, to my huge relief.

When I should be enjoying sex, I find myself thinking about my dear mum's breast cancer diagnosis, work, money and, pretty often, my insecurity about having gone from a size 10 to a size 14 since I met Ben.

**WHAT NAGOSKI SAYS NEXT IS PROFOUND. 'BODY SELF-CRITICISM MAY BE THE SINGLE MOST COMMON BARRIER TO WOMEN EXPERIENCING SEXUAL PLEASURE.**

There's a thing called "spectatoring" where people, instead of noticing what's going on inside their body, are more concerned with what they look like. And that is *not* a turn on.

'People think that if you conform to their idea of what a sexually appealing woman is, then you will be good >>

at sex.' But sexual contentment isn't about looks, what kind of underwear you have on or whether you're performing like a porn star. 'How great would you feel about sex if, instead, you felt really beautiful or you had a profound trust in your partner?' It makes sense.

Nagoski explains one of her big theories. 'Humans have a dual control system when it comes to sex: sexual brakes and accelerators.' Everyone is different, I learn. Some people have sensitive accelerators, ie. they might fancy sex quite often, and some people have sensitive brakes, ie. don't feel like sex when they're stressed.

I realise I must have a sensitive accelerator *and* a sensitive brake. Which is why I wanted lots of sex with a new partner, but now my stress has put the brakes on.

But there's another, darker, element to my story.

I've read in Nagoski's book that rape can affect sexual functioning profoundly. I tell her that when I was 19, I had sex at a party when I was too drunk to consent. I know I didn't want to have sex. She nods and tells me one in four women in the US are sexually assaulted. 'That's a lot,' I say. 'One in four,' she repeats.

'Think about it,' says Nagoski, 'your body was used as a weapon against you. Your brain learned to experience sex as a stressor. You now need to teach your body that sex is a safe experience and even though that happened, you are safe.'

So, when Ben and I weren't a serious couple, the excitement blocked out the effects of the trauma. Now, it has come back to the surface.

But the belief that sexual desire dies with commitment is, she says to my delight, total crap. 'It's not that monogamy is inherently bad for desire, it's the way people *do* monogamy that can kill sex.' With your partner, you need to find new ways to explore each other's sexuality and feel more confident.

## 'YOUR BODY IS ALLOWED TO FEEL THE MOST PLEASURE IT POSSIBLY CAN,' Nagoski reassures me.

'The thing that predicts sexual wellbeing is overall wellbeing. Surprise! If you are stressed out, exhausted, lonely, your relationship isn't working out – that's hitting the brake and preventing you from releasing into sexual pleasure. It turns out that the best predictor of overall wellbeing is... how you feel about how you feel.'

Nagoski describes sexuality as being like a flock of birds. The birds are flying to the goal of orgasm but they can get easily sidetracked by thoughts. Is someone

going to walk in? Do you smell down there? Is your tummy a bit too flabby? In that case, half your flock – or all of them – may never arrive.

To deal with my own anxious thoughts, Nagoski advises me to practise something called non-judgement.

## 'One night I can't **WAIT** any longer. The sex is **EXCITING** and feels rebellious'

'That's where you notice that your heartbeat is racing and, rather than freaking out about it, you just think, "Oh, that's what's happening right now,"' she says.

Nagoski laughs when I ask her how I could reach orgasm. 'Try not to worry about that, just focus on enjoying the moment rather than reaching a goal,' she says. She advises we don't even try to have sex at all for a few weeks, and instead that I focus on my overall wellbeing.


So, I do. I restart yoga ('Yoga is really good because it requires you pay attention to your internal experience'), go back to therapy, practise not judging my body and aim to be mindful about Mum's diagnosis.

The first few nights, Ben and I cuddle in bed; I'm relieved to know there won't be any awkwardness. We talk and exchange massages, copying one of the case studies in the book. One night, completely relaxed, I can't wait any longer. The sex is exciting and feels rebellious.

Although I don't have an orgasm, I don't mind. As we spend more time in bed, I notice my brakes (stress, fear, weight, worry) and my accelerators (relaxation, confidence, playfulness, having Ben tell me what to do). The more I think about sex and discuss it with Ben, the more I want to do it.

I normally keep my dressing gown on until I'm under the covers, but one night I pluck up the courage to walk

into our bedroom naked except for a pair of high heels.

Ben appreciates this (an understatement) and that night, we take things slowly, with almost an hour of foreplay. When we do have full sex, with clitoral stimulation, I finally manage to orgasm. I lie back, laughing with relief. The brakes are finally off and the accelerator is firmly on. 

*Come As You Are: The Surprising New Science That Will Transform Your Sex Life* by Emily Nagoski (Simon & Schuster, £12.99)

## The sex advice that worked for me

**1** Try letting the partner with the lower desire levels initiate sex for a day, a week... even a month. You might be amazed at how the slower pace increases the intimacy between you.

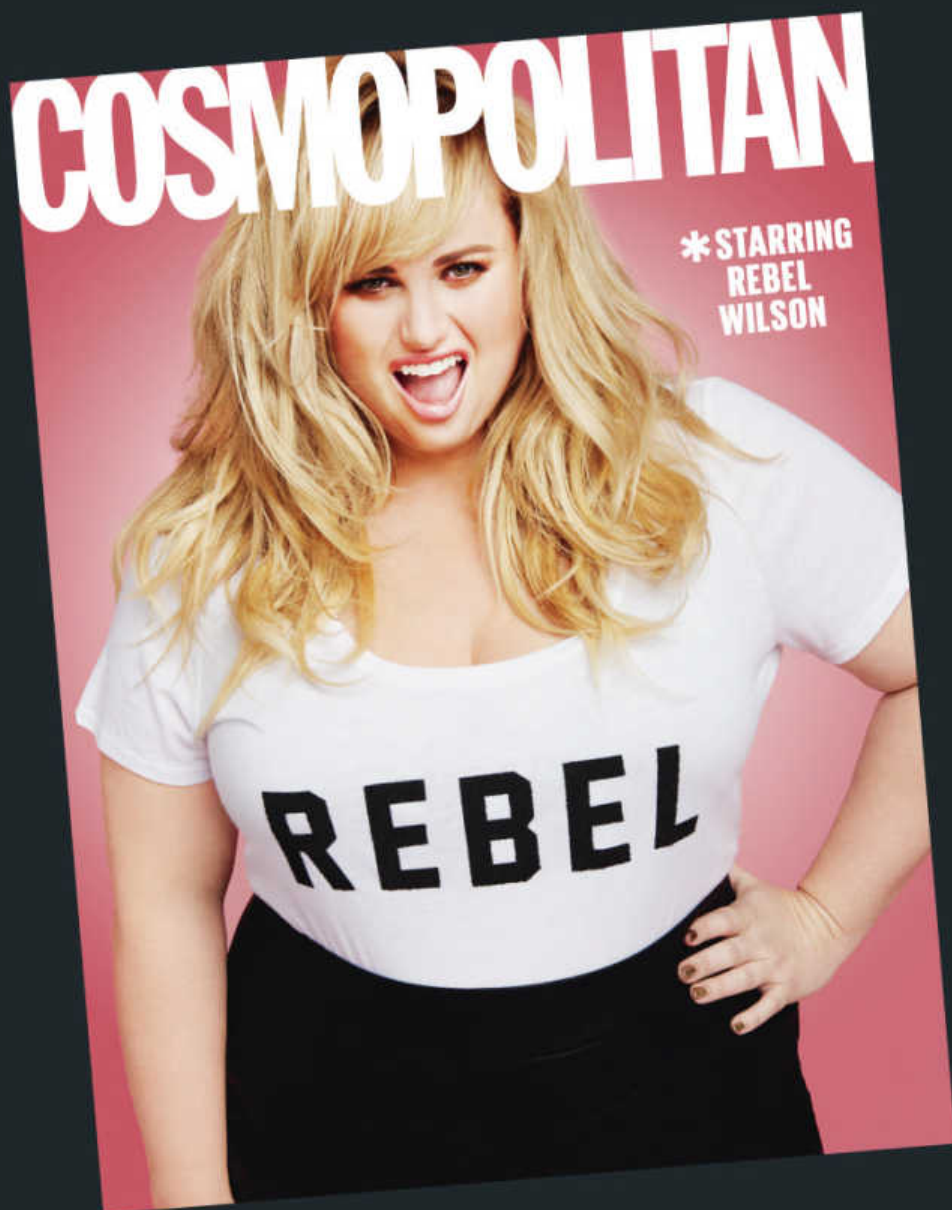
**2** Think about context before you blame yourself. If your partner makes a move and you are mid-work email, you might feel irritated. But in a different context – say, a hotel room after a glass or two of wine – you'd be likely to feel different.

**3** Finally, remember this: you're not broken, you are perfect. Women often experience desire as a response to stimulation. Everybody is individual and has their own tastes, their own brakes and accelerators and their own stressors and contexts.

For more advice from Emily Nagoski, go to [REDONLINE.CO.UK](http://REDONLINE.CO.UK)



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# ASK PHILIPPA

A reader wants advice on building a real relationship with her mother-in-law. It may not be easy, says psychotherapist and Red's agony aunt, Philippa Perry

Photograph CAMERON McNEE



**I have a great relationship with my husband but am at a loss how to get a workable relationship with my mother-in-law. I find her hard to like and Christmas is coming, with the obligatory visit.**

**I don't seem to be able to get anything right. When she visits, I ask what she'd like to do and she'll say, 'You choose.' But whatever I organise, she never enjoys it. She says she doesn't mind which restaurant we go to, but she'll sit looking unhappy. On a walk, if I hang back so she can walk with her son, she'll bark at me to 'keep up'.**

**She'll complain to me about other family members, but when I suggest she speaks directly to them, I'm the bad guy. I know my family's style of getting things out into the open is wildly different from hers of hints and allegations, but surely open discussion is possible when your kids are 30?**

**She's not even nice to my husband, making him feel guilty for not seeing her more. She has a tally system: visits to us 'don't count'; neither do visits to her made only**

**by my husband. Her calls must be answered in a very quick, yet unspecified timeframe, or she bombards us with messages.**

**But the real clincher is the lack of any sort of joy. I love a laugh but, during a visit, all my sense of humour is sucked out of me. By the end, I'm a sullen, monosyllabic version of myself. Help, please!**

**Name withheld**

There are two sorts of relationships at work here. An authentic relationship bond like you and your husband seem to have, and the fantasy bond your mother-in-law seems to have with everyone. She can't be real with people. If she has a complaint, she'll indirectly address it to another person to pass it on, as though she's allergic to real communication. A fantasy bond is all about role-playing happy families, all about appearances. She


wants everything to look right but never goes further than play-acting this. Truth isn't important, authenticity isn't important; kidding herself and appearances are everything.

It's not really her fault; this middle-class keeping-up-appearances was the norm in the middle of the last century. Roles and form were everything; what people actually experienced and felt were not important. So your mother-in-law isn't used to examining her feelings, even to think about what food she'd like. Instead, she sticks to rules, which may well be unspoken but she assumes everyone knows them. So, she has a rule about how often families should visit, not based on wanting to see them but on what the form is. Of course, her feelings leak out, but she's probably not aware.

I hope this helps you to understand her a bit more. Going by rules is probably all she's ever known. Now you have a choice: play by her rules or really be yourself. Stop trying to get it right for her and stop sitting on your own personality when you're with her.

You could be open with her, tell her how her behaviour affects you. You could try: 'When you... I feel... I'd prefer it if...'. When she seems to be acting oddly, you could ask her what rule or belief she is being guided by. Then you could suggest she's guided by her feelings as well as protocol.

But she would probably think you were bonkers if you did this – speaking openly doesn't appear to be possible for her. In fact, I don't know whether anything will 'work'. I think your mother-in-law wants to live in a bubble of her fantasy happy 'right' life, and for everyone to perfectly play their part in this, without any of the showers that come with the sunshine.

I can see for you she's a puzzle and a bit infuriating and definitely a buzzkill. I think it's lovely you didn't mention cutting her out of your lives altogether. After all, she's probably doing her best. If you can understand that she cannot see she has a choice about how to be, and if you can take her quirks a little less seriously, you will find compassion for her. 

## WHAT DO YOU NEED TO ASK PHILIPPA?

Philippa would love to give you an answer to your problem, whether it's about life change, work/life balance or work issues, expectations or confidence, goals and ambitions, children or fertility, friends, frenemies, partners or relations. Email her in confidence at [therapy@redmagazine.co.uk](mailto:therapy@redmagazine.co.uk). You'll find all Philippa's past columns at [Redonline.co.uk](http://Redonline.co.uk).



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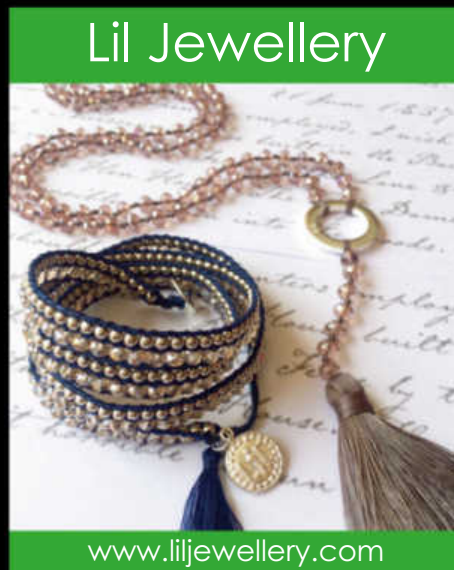
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**Heal's** [heals.co.uk](http://heals.co.uk)

**Hélène Zubeldia** At Monnier Frères

**Helen Moore** [helenmoore.com](http://helenmoore.com)

**Herno** At Harvey Nichols

**Hilfiger Collection** [tommy.com](http://tommy.com)

**Hill & Friends** [hillandfriends.com](http://hillandfriends.com)

**Homebase** [homebase.co.uk](http://homebase.co.uk)

**House of Fraser**

[houseoffraser.co.uk](http://houseoffraser.co.uk)

**Hunter** [hunterboots.com](http://hunterboots.com)

**Ikkii** At Harvey Nichols

**Iris & Ink** At The Outnet

**Isabel Marant Etoile** At Liberty

**Jaeger** [jaeger.co.uk](http://jaeger.co.uk)

**Jennifer Behr** At Net-A-Porter

**Jerome Dreyfuss**

[jerome-dreyfuss.com](http://jerome-dreyfuss.com)

**Jil Sander** At Fenwick

**Jimmy Choo** [jimmychoo.com](http://jimmychoo.com)

**John Frieda** At Boots

**John Lewis** [johnlewis.com](http://johnlewis.com)

**Jo Malone** [jomalone.co.uk](http://jomalone.co.uk)

**Joomi Lim** At Liberty

**Joseph** At Net-A-Porter

**Kahina Giving Beauty**

At Net-A-Porter

**Karen Millen** [karenmillen.com](http://karenmillen.com)

**Karen Walker** [karenwalker.com](http://karenwalker.com)

**Kérastase** [kerastase.co.uk](http://kerastase.co.uk)

**Kiehl's** At Liberty

**Kipling** [kipling.com](http://kipling.com)

**Lancôme** At Boots

**Larose** At Monnier Frères

**Le Labo** At Liberty

**Le Specs** At Net-A-Porter

**Liberty** [liberty.co.uk](http://liberty.co.uk)

**Links of London** [linksoflondon.com](http://linksoflondon.com)

**Liz Earle** [uk.lizearle.com](http://uk.lizearle.com)

**L'Occitane** [uk.loccitane.com](http://uk.loccitane.com)

**Lookfantastic** [lookfantastic.com](http://lookfantastic.com)

**L'Oréal** At Boots

**LSA** At House of Fraser

**M&Co** [mandco.com](http://mandco.com)

**Madeleine Thompson** At Fenwick

**Maison Kitsuné** [kitsune.fr](http://kitsune.fr)

**Maje** [uk.maje.com](http://uk.maje.com)

**Mango** [mango.com](http://mango.com)

**Marks & Spencer**

[marksandspencer.com](http://marksandspencer.com)

**Markus Lupfer** [markuslupfer.com](http://markuslupfer.com)

**Marni** At Liberty

**Masscob** At Liberty

**Massimo Dutti**

[massimodutti.com](http://massimodutti.com)

**Matchesfashion.com**

[matchesfashion.com](http://matchesfashion.com)

**Matthew Williamson** by Linda

**Farrow** At Farfetch

**Max Factor** At Superdrug

**MaxMara, Weekend MaxMara**

[maxmara.com](http://maxmara.com)

**MGSM** At Matchesfashion.com

**Miu Miu** At Net-A-Porter; Harrods

**MOA** At Cult Beauty

**Molton Brown** [moltonbrown.co.uk](http://moltonbrown.co.uk)

**Moncler, Moncler E**

[moncler.com](http://moncler.com); Harrods

**Monnier Frères** [monnierfreres.co.uk](http://monnierfreres.co.uk)

**Monsoon** [monsoon.co.uk](http://monsoon.co.uk)

**Mother of Pearl** At Harvey Nichols

**Muji** [muji.com/uk](http://muji.com/uk)

**Murad** [murad.co.uk](http://murad.co.uk)

**MyTheresa** [mytheresa.com](http://mytheresa.com)

**Nails Inc** [nailsinc.com](http://nailsinc.com)

**Net-A-Porter** [net-a-porter.com](http://net-a-porter.com)

**Neutrogena** [neutrogena.co.uk](http://neutrogena.co.uk)

**Next** [next.co.uk](http://next.co.uk)

**Nude** At Space NK

**Oliver Bonas** [oliverbonas.com](http://oliverbonas.com)

**Olympus** At John Lewis

**Omorovicza** [omorovicza.com/uk](http://omorovicza.com/uk)

**OPI** [opiuk.com](http://opiuk.com)

**Origins** [origins.co.uk](http://origins.co.uk)

**The Outnet** [theoutnet.com](http://theoutnet.com)

**Panasonic** At John Lewis

**Pandora** [pandora.net](http://pandora.net)

**Pam & Gela** At Harvey Nichols

**Paule Ka** [pauleka.com](http://pauleka.com)

**Perfect Moment** [perfectmoment.com](http://perfectmoment.com)

**Perricone MD** At Lookfantastic

**Philips** [philips-shop.co.uk](http://philips-shop.co.uk)

**Pia Jewellery** [piajewellery.com](http://piajewellery.com)

**Prada** At Selfridges

**Pureology** At Lookfantastic

**Radley** [radley.co.uk](http://radley.co.uk)

**Rag & Bone** At Net-A-Porter

**Rahua** [rahua.com](http://rahua.com)

**Ralph Lauren Collection,**

**Polo Ralph Lauren** [ralphlauren.co.uk](http://ralphlauren.co.uk)

**Ray-Ban** At Sunglass Hut

**Rebecca** [rebecca.it/en](http://rebecca.it/en); House of Fraser

**Rebecca Minkoff** [rebeccaminkoff.com](http://rebeccaminkoff.com)

**Rituals** [uk.rituals.com](http://uk.rituals.com)

**Robinson Pelham**

[robinsonpelham.com](http://robinsonpelham.com)

**Rochas** At Net-A-Porter

**Rockins** At Matchesfashion.com

**Russell & Bromley**

[russellandbromley.co.uk](http://russellandbromley.co.uk)

**Sally** [sallyexpress.com](http://sallyexpress.com)



# STARS

Yasmin Boland reveals what's in store for you this month

Illustration KALEY McKEAN

## CAPRICORN

Dec 22nd-Jan 19th

*The new moon is in your sign while Mercury reverses in Capricorn. You're in the cosmic spotlight. You can rethink your entire life – from your job, love life to location – then harness the energies to make some changes. Powerful times.*



## AQUARIUS Jan 20th-Feb 18th

It's time for you to have another think about what scares you. Why? Because the more you think about it and work out where the fear comes from, the more likely you are to see the fear off. Fears are life's scaredy-cats. When we look them in the eye, they often run in the opposite direction.

## PISCES Feb 19th-Mar 20th

This month brings you the chance to catch up with old friends you haven't seen in a while, or even to make up with someone you fell out with. 2016 can potentially be one of the best years of your life. So what do you want? The sooner you decide that, the sooner the universe can deliver it to you.

## ARIES Mar 21st-Apr 19th

If you're one of the Aries who is giving their professional life a do over, you have excellent stars this month, so don't stop! Mercury going backwards in your career zone suggests you can rethink plans or revisit an old idea (or company) or somehow get a second chance (or second career?). Use it or lose it.

## TAURUS Apr 20th-May 20th

Your travel plans might be up in the air this month, and/or a trip away might go a tad haywire, but don't panic. Travel always broadens the mind and never more so than for you right now. In other news, if you want to do some study in the year ahead, the skies support you, so sign up now.

## GEMINI May 21st-June 21st

It's time for you to have a rethink about your sex life, if you don't mind us saying. Mercury is going backwards in your sex zone and this month's new moon is taking place in there, too. If your life is slightly sexless right now, is that how you want to continue? If not, now is the time to consider your options.

## CANCER June 22nd-July 22nd

The new moon in your love zone coupled with other planetary action has a clear message; relationships don't have to stay the same. If you want yours to be different, write a list of what you want to create for yourself. Letting the universe, your partner (or your ex) know what you want is always a good start.

## LEO July 23rd-Aug 23rd

Your working life is in focus. What better time to figure out what you want from your daily life in the coming year. Think about what you would like to fill your days with – be realistic in terms of what is actually possible. You could really find things go the way you want them to, if you take action now.

## VIRGO Aug 24th-Sept 22nd

You might have countless duties and familial obligations or annoying flatmates in your personal life which seem to have been sent to test you – and guess what, they have. But there is respite this month. January challenges you to have another think about how important it is to have fun. It's good for your health.

## LIBRA Sept 23rd-Oct 23rd

Life at home might be topsy-turvy, but you're in a cycle where you can revolutionise the way you relate to the person/people you live with and/or family members. Talking things through can help release tensions and bring solutions. PS. Life at home is sweet? Use January to declutter. It'll super-charge your year.

## SCORPIO Oct 24th-Nov 22nd

Ain't gonna kid you, January could be rather confusing! Reason being, you have communications planet Mercury going backwards in your communications zone. The way to get through it is to keep your sense of humour. Laugh out loud as much as you can when things are ridiculous.

## SAGITTARIUS Nov 23rd-Dec 21st

Now is the time for you to get serious about money. Life might seem rather tiring at the moment (thanks to Saturn in Sagittarius) but if you use the current energies the right way, you'll be setting yourself up for a more stable future. Give your financial set-up some more thought. What needs changing? 📌



## SKYE GYNGELL

It takes just three little bangles to get the homebody chef into the party spirit

*Photographs ANDREW MONTGOMERY*

I never feel glamorous. For most of my life I have my hair scrunched back with no make-up on. Mascara would melt over the stove, you see, and I don't wear jewellery in the kitchen because it would get in the way. When I venture out into the restaurant I always think that I'm ruining the room, in my stained whites with my rough hands all wrinkled and stubby from years of dealing with pots and pans. I don't have a glamorous life, I'm pretty tired, and the idea of going out to parties, having to speak to people and socialise can fill me with exhaustion.

But then I put on these three little bangles and I feel dressed – they give me security. I bought them three years ago from Mouki Mou on London's Chiltern Street and they have become my party armour, the one thing I wear that can get me in the mood. Because I do feel I ought to go out more, I ought not to spend Saturday nights in bed with a Danish box-set. That's my idea of heaven, but I often think, 'Skye, you have to change or you'll be a lonely old woman.' I'm never going to be an out-on-the-town sort of girl, but these bracelets make me feel like maybe I could be. [springrestaurant.co.uk](http://springrestaurant.co.uk)





## Their future starts today

From their very first days your baby starts to write their future, and breastmilk gives them the best start in life. If you choose to move on, Aptamil with **Pronutra+** Follow On milk is our most advanced formula yet. Inspired by 30 years of research, it contains our highest ever levels of Omega 3 to support normal visual development, as well as iron to support normal cognitive development. Helping you lay the foundations for your baby's future.

For more information visit [Aptaclub.co.uk/pronutra](http://Aptaclub.co.uk/pronutra)



Isla, 10 months. Important notice: breastfeeding is best for your baby. Follow On milk should only be used as part of a mixed diet and not as a breastmilk substitute before 6 months. Use on the advice of your healthcare professional.

# SAUVAGE

THE NEW FRAGRANCE

Dior

